

Regional Integration in West Africa

**Proceedings of the
International
Conference
organized by IDRC
in Dakar, Senegal,
11-15 January 1993**

Edited by
**Momar-Coumba Diop
and Réal Lavergne**



The International Development Research Centre
Le Centre de recherches pour le développement international
El Centro Internacional de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo

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FOREWORD

This document synthesizes the main ideas expressed at the International Conference on West African Integration, organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Dakar, from 11 to 15 January 1993. The aim of this publication is to provide a ready reference for researchers and decision-makers on the main ideas emanating from the conference.

The synthesis is based on the conference papers, the proceedings, and written commentaries. Much has been omitted, and certain ideas have been reworked. However, we feel we included the main issues that were discussed and emphasized the seminal ideas. We apologize for any inaccuracies or omissions that may remain.

We thank all those who provided the background material and the ideas. Most of the collaborators will find their names in the pages that follow.

INTRODUCTION

Over 30 years after independence, West Africa remains highly divided. Sixteen countries make up this area, and all but three of the countries (Nigeria, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire) have populations under 10 million. The partition of the region is reinforced by trade, linguistic, cultural, administrative, and other barriers. Despite efforts to reduce these barriers, progress to date remains quite limited.

The need for a more integrated subregion is obvious. The world has become increasingly interdependent, and there is a desire among intellectuals and development people at all levels to promote greater regional integration and cooperation. There are many ideas of what to do. These ideas include the usual attention to economic integration as well as regional cooperation in any number of areas: infrastructure, resource management, education and research, health, information and communications, science and technology, business and NGO networks, and human rights and democracy. The theme is vast! Regional integration and cooperation is a multidimensional issue that is difficult to grasp from the perspective of any single discipline or area of specialization.

Unfortunately, there are few opportunities for researchers and other professionals of different callings and disciplines to meet and compare their respective viewpoints. Aware of this reality, IDRC mobilized its own multidisciplinary resources and its many contacts with research institutions in West Africa. IDRC organized a comprehensive review of regional integration and cooperation issues in West Africa to help mobilize endogenous research on the topic.

The International Conference on Regional Integration in West Africa was the culmination of activities initiated in 1991 through a series of national seminars held in Dakar, Lagos, Accra, Ouagadougou, and Abidjan. These seminars helped to reinforce communications between politicians, researchers, and private-sector representatives to set research priorities for regional integration in West Africa, and to identify participants for the conference.

The issues were approached from a multidisciplinary perspective, and the program covered the strategic, economic, cultural, intellectual, sociopolitical, and institutional aspects of regional integration. There were more than 200 participants and observers. The majority were professionals from universities and research centres in the region. They were joined by researchers from other parts of Africa, Europe, and North America and by representatives of key regional institutions, donor agencies, government, and development organizations.

The conference organizers benefitted from the collaboration of numerous institutions. Several institutions, in addition to IDRC, contributed financially or materially. These included the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Ford Foundation, the Regional Integration Promotion Unit for West and Central Africa (CINERGIE), the Council for the Development of Social and Economic Research in Africa (CODESRIA), and the Banque centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO, Central Bank of West African States). Other institutions collaborated through their participation in the Scientific Committee. These included

the Association of African Women for Research on Development (AAWORD), the African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS), CODESRIA, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (AIEDP), the African Regional Centre of Technology (ARCT), the Institut sénégalais de recherches agricoles (ISRA, Senegalese Institute for Agricultural Research), and Cheikh Anta Diop University. We would like to thank all of these institutions for their contributions.

We would also like to thank Boubacar Barry, the Scientific Coordinator of the Conference, Réal Lavergne, who was responsible for the Conference in IDRC, and the other members of the Conference team: Momar Coumba Diop, Bouyock Ndaw, Moussa Dramé, Mamadou Seck, Thierry Barreto, and Jessica Rouleau. Participants on the Scientific Committee included: Akwasi Aidoo, Michael Bassey, Alioune Camara, Youssouf Dembélé, Abdoulaye Diagne, Mamadou Diouf, Mohamed Haddar, Ousmane Kane, Karamoko Kané, Mohammed Mah'Moud, Veronica Mullei, Mamadou Sidibé, Ola Smith, Demba Sy, Habib Sy, and Sibry Tapsoba, in addition to the professionals on the conference team. Finally, we would like to recognize the entire IDRC staff in Dakar, whose team spirit was remarkable in organizing the conference. Our warmest thanks to all of them.

Gérald R. Bourrier
Regional Director
IDRC, Dakar

VISIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony was chaired by Famara Ibrahima Sagna, Minister of Economics, Finance, and Planning, and Minister of African Economic Integration for Senegal.

In his welcoming speech, Souleymane Niang,¹ Rector of Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, recalled the regional character that Senegal had conferred upon the University of Dakar from the time of its creation. He advocated a regional approach to higher education in Africa, through the development of regional universities and centres of excellence in specific fields of technological and scientific endeavour. He called for the reinforcement of scientific associations at the regional level and the award of special status to researchers to foster excellence in science and technology through international cooperation and exchange.

The Scientific Coordinator of the conference, Boubacar Barry, then reviewed the background and objectives of the conference and emphasized the importance of the national seminars and the numerous papers produced as part of that process. Barry hoped the conference would be the precursor of a more multidisciplinary approach to regional integration.

The Honourable Flora MacDonald,² Chairperson of IDRC's Board of Governors, alluded to the role the conference should play in helping IDRC define its own strategic orientations. She stressed the scientific nature of the conference and invited participants to adopt a critical and dispassionate approach as they sought to identify what was or was not feasible in matters of regional integration.

Ibrahima Sagna then spoke about the Senegalese government's policy on economic integration. As evidence of the government's commitment, he cited the establishment of a separate ministry in charge of African integration. Sagna noted with satisfaction the recent involvement of researchers in regional integration issues, and he indicated the readiness of decision-makers to seek collaboration from the scientific community when identifying new strategies and policies. Sagna favoured a step-by-step approach to regional integration based on Leopold Senghor's notion of "concentric circles" — the concentration of immediate efforts where their impact would be felt most rapidly.

¹ Souleymane Niang, *"Allocution de Souleymane Niang, Recteur de l'université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar,"* 4 p.

² Flora MacDonald, *"Speech by the Honourable Flora MacDonald, Chairwoman of the IDRC Board of Governors,"* 5 p.

Keynote Address by Abass Bundu

The opening ceremony was followed by a keynote address by Dr Abass Bundu,³ Executive Secretary of ECOWAS. Because Abass Bundu was absent for health reasons, his paper was read by Frank Ofei. The session was chaired by J.B. Wilmot; Baba Top and Omotaya Olaniyan were the rapporteurs.

Bundu reviewed some of the accomplishments of the last 2 decades. He described the major intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) that have been created in West Africa: there are currently about 40 IGOs operating in the region. This impressive achievement testifies to the community spirit and solidarity that has developed among West African states. However, these IGOs have not had any significant development impact because of difficulties in securing effective implementation of integration programs in the member countries.

Bundu identified some of the problems that have been encountered by ECOWAS, including the slow rate of ratification of conventions and protocols, the low levels of implementation, poor attendance at ECOWAS meetings, and the accumulation of arrears in contributions. He regretted the absence of an integration culture — and indeed a development culture generally — in the member countries. Priority in the newly independent countries was accorded to nation-building, and various factors conspired to keep countries apart, including differences in ideology and approach, the fear of domination by Nigeria, the burden of certain institutional and economic structures inherited from the colonial era, and the economic crisis that has plagued the region since the early 1980s.

In Bundu's view, the future of ECOWAS calls for new approaches not limited to traditional forms of market integration. Efforts to improve the physical integration of the subregion through infrastructure development should be combined with efforts to promote the development and diversification of economic production. Monetary integration should also be an objective. Furthermore, the process of integration should extend beyond economic integration, to include cooperation in social, cultural, political, and defence matters.

Although much remains to be done to revitalize the regional integration process, the reforms envisaged in the revised ECOWAS Treaty could constitute a major advance. The strength of the revised treaty is that it accords supranational status to the community, through measures that would strengthen community institutions and make community decisions directly applicable in the member countries. This includes plans for the establishment of the following: a West African Parliament, an ECOWAS Court of Justice to replace the existing Community Tribunal, an Economic and Social Council to reflect the views of civil society, an independent tax base for the community, and a Community Investment Code.⁴

³ Abass Bundu, "ECOWAS and the Future of Regional Integration in West Africa," 24 p.

⁴ The revised ECOWAS Treaty was signed by the assembled Heads of State at the 16th ECOWAS Summit, held in Cotonou, 22-24 July 1993.

Comments were offered by S.K.B. Asante and Fernando J. Cardoso. Asante recalled the optimistic outlook of his own book on ECOWAS in 1986.⁵ He felt it was no longer possible to be so optimistic, in view of the weak results achieved in practice since that time. Like Bundu, Asante felt it was necessary to identify new strategies and approaches, consistent with principles of democratic participation. He felt that a constituency for regional integration could only be built up through the participation of social groups. Regional integration could not be imposed from above, as has been attempted until now. To be successful, any new initiatives must take full account of the costs and benefits of integration for different social and political groups to ensure their political viability. Measures must also be taken to ensure that member countries effectively implement ECOWAS agreements.

Cardoso believes that regional integration in West Africa has failed because of a lack of genuine interest at the national level. The challenge is to identify regional projects capable of arousing such interest. The trade-focused approach adopted hitherto has not only failed to meet that challenge, it has produced conflicts of interest that have been difficult to manage. The integration process would benefit most from projects of joint interest that are likely to forge a link between national and regional development plans.

The Views of Regional Institutions and Donors

The afternoon of Monday, 11 January, was dedicated to a forum on the views of regional institutions and donors. Mahamane Brah chaired the session; the rapporteurs were Mamadou Diouf, Daniel Bach, and Paul Ndiaye.

The session began with a statement by G.R. Bourrier,⁶ Regional Director of IDRC. Bourrier situated the conference with reference to IDRC's regional strategy for West and Central Africa. This strategy covers four main areas of intervention: the restructuring of production systems; human resource development; decentralization; and regional integration.

Mbaye-Diop Sarr,⁷ speaking on behalf of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), focused his intervention on the project to convert the West African Monetary Union (WAMU) into a full-fledged economic union, as decided by WAMU heads of state in Dakar in July 1992. Sarr reminded the audience of the role originally envisaged for WAMU as an instrument of regional integration, as reflected in the basic texts of that institution. He also

⁵ S.K.B. Asante, *The Political Economy of Regionalism in Africa: A Decade of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)*. New York: Praeger, 1986.

⁶ Gérald R. Bourrier, "Speech by Gérald R. Bourrier, Regional Director of IDRC, to the International Conference on Regional Integration in West Africa," 8 p.

⁷ BCEAO, "L'expérience et le rôle de la BCEAO en matière d'intégration sous-régionale : perspectives de l'union économique envisagée au sein de l'UMOA," 13 p. [paper presented by Mbaye-Diop Sarr].

highlighted the need for greater coherence between the franc zone's common monetary policy and other economic policies — fiscal policies in particular — that have remained in the hands of member states. The mandate given to the Governor of the BCEAO is to initiate a dynamic process of economic integration based on sound financial and institutional structures. This would involve the explicit transfer of sovereignty over certain matters to regional institutions.

The Economic Union so constituted would evolve in a gradual way around four main areas of economic integration:

- The convergence of fiscal policies among countries, and the guarantee of consistency with the zone's common monetary policy,
- The harmonization and modernization of the legal environment for doing business,
- The harmonization of tax regimes, and
- Trade policy reform, including the elimination of nontariff barriers, the harmonization and rationalization of effective rates of protection, the reduction of tariffs on trade with the rest of the world, and the complete elimination of tariffs within the Economic Union.

No conflict is intended between this project and ECOWAS. It is hoped that the project could provide new impetus for ECOWAS by introducing a dynamic new element that might be a catalyst for the process. Indeed, it is hoped that other countries will join the Economic Union as part of a dynamic, evolutionary process.

CIDA representative Denis Briand⁸ advocated a new approach to regional integration more consistent with current trends toward the globalization of the world economy. Such a strategy would be based on the "variable geometry" approach to regional integration, which recommends a greater degree of flexibility. It would allow trade liberalization to proceed according to different schemes for different groups of countries, encourage sectoral agreements between neighbouring countries, and open up opportunities for new countries to join in successful schemes at a later date. The new approach should be less inward-looking than in the past and focus on trade liberalization and factor mobility within the community, without neglecting the desirability of greater openness to world markets. Briand considers such a strategy more realistic and economically more efficient than the approach pursued so far in Africa.

CIDA's commitment to regional integration in West Africa can be observed in its new policy, which takes into account the regional impact of all CIDA projects, including strictly bilateral projects in individual countries. CIDA is also prepared to support IGOs, but would do so conditionally based on their rationalization and a clear recognition of their authority by member states. Finally, CIDA would like to encourage greater participation of the private sector in regional integration.

⁸ Denis Briand, *"Intégration régionale dans un monde global,"* 7 p.

African Development Bank (ADB)⁹ representative Laye Camara pointed out that the ADB Group has a statutory obligation to support regional integration by financing development projects. The ADB's experience in this regard is rather disappointing because only 2.13% of loans and grants awarded by the ADB between 1967 and 1991 were for multinational projects (47% of these were through subregional financial institutions, and 25% were in the transport sector). This amount does not include financing for national projects of special relevance to regional integration. Camara explained some of the problems faced by the ADB in funding multinational projects, including the legal complications that arise when more than one government is involved in a single project and low priority is accorded multinational projects by the member states.

The ADB has also supported certain regional institutions: it has cooperative arrangements with ECOWAS and the West African Development Bank (WADB), which it helps to underwrite; it has organized regional activities in support of the private sector; and it has helped create a number of regional institutions in specialized areas of activity. Camara concluded his presentation by discussing the role the ADB could play in implementing the Abuja Treaty.

Michel Flesch spoke on behalf of France's Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Activities (**Mission de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle**) and outlined the economic integration projects that France is promoting.¹⁰ These projects mesh with the ones described by the representative of the BCEAO. French support is focused on the franc zone, where the member countries have established a certain tradition of shared sovereignty and collaboration in monetary matters. The idea is to extend this collaboration, and to prepare the ground for the economic integration of the franc zone, through a project to rationalize the legal and financial frameworks surrounding economic activity in these countries. The project has five components: insurance, social security, business law, regional training centres, and Afristat. In parallel to this, the French are supporting the current reflections on how to transform the monetary unions represented by WAMU and the Bank of Central African States (BCAS) into full-fledged economic unions.

World Bank representative Elkyn Chaparro,¹¹ referred to long-standing discussions in the Bank on the subject of regional integration. In his view, the main justification for regional unity today is to strengthen the region's competitive position in the world. The Bank has some reservations about the traditional protectionist model of regional integration, which has failed in the past, and is being replaced by new approaches in both Latin America and Asia. Strategic

⁹ Laye Camara, *"La contribution du Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement dans la réalisation de l'intégration économique et son rôle dans la mise en oeuvre du Traité d'Abuja instituant le marché commun africain,"* 19 p.

¹⁰ Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Activities (France), *"L'Intégration régionale à travers les espaces économiques et financiers,"* 10 p. [Paper presented by Michel Flesch.]

¹¹ World Bank representative Elkyn Chaparro did not present a written paper.

thinking in Africa should thus focus on how to present a common front to penetrate international markets.

The World Bank is prepared to support massively any new initiative that it considers realistic and practical. Specific examples include the economic union project for the franc zone, projects for the deregulation of telecommunications, the improvement of road infrastructure, and projects put forward by the Conference of West African Ministers of Agriculture. The Bank is also prepared to support regional training and research, provided this can be operationalized in an effective way. Finally, the Bank is interested in programs aimed at facilitating investment and trade within the region through the harmonization of legal and administrative environments. The Bank's primary concern is to see Africans take charge of strategic thinking on African development. The Bank will listen to what Africans have to say and provide support for projects that it considers relevant and worthwhile.

The representative of the **European Community (EC)**, Aslam Aziz, highlighted the recent dynamic in favour of regional integration in Africa. He pointed to the substantial reforms currently under way in numerous regional groupings, including the West African Economic Community (CEAO), WAMU, the Central African Customs and Economic Union (CACEU), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU). He noted the priority accorded to regional integration and cooperation at the Africa Conference held in Maastricht in July 1990 and observed that the Commission of European Communities had undertaken to coordinate a program of action in support of those objectives within the framework of the Global Coalition for Africa.¹² With regard to West Africa, Aziz shared the views of previous speakers on the importance of the proposed Economic Union of franc zone countries.

Based on the European experience, he suggested some basic principles for the success of regional integration schemes in Africa:

- Political commitment around achievable goals, combined with clear strategies and set timetables for their implementation,
- A stable and peaceful political and economic environment,
- Enlightened trade policies, combining selective protectionist measures with a general policy of openness to world markets,
- Openness to all sectors of society, transparency, and political accountability,
- Subsidiarity — the principle that the community should only intervene in areas where it can do so better than the member states themselves,
- Strong autonomous institutions with access to independent resources, and
- Because of the different situations and interests of member states, a progressive approach, based on the notion of variable geometry.

¹² In this regard, a four-page information note titled "Activities of the Commission of European Communities (CCE) to support regional cooperation and integration in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in the framework of the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA)," was distributed to participants of the Conference.

Aziz proposed four basic principles for the Economic Union of the franc zone countries:

- A flexible, progressive approach regarding the incorporation of new members,
- Democratic controls over the management and functioning of the union, based on democratic institutions at the national level,
- A high level of transparency, facilitated by a "Court of Auditors of the Union", and
- Due account for the role to be played by other regional institutions such as ECOWAS and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

Mbaye Diouf, the representative for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), reviewed the approaches to economic integration advocated by the ECA [the Lagos Plan of Action, the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP), and the Abuja Treaty].¹³ Diouf criticized donor arguments in favour of the so-called "variable geometry" approach posed as an alternative to the comprehensive approach advocated by the heads of state through the Abuja Treaty. This "pragmatic" approach only serves to undermine the Abuja strategy. It seeks to promote market liberalization in every way possible, while working toward the destruction of subregional organizations through the reduction of external tariffs to a level unable to protect local producers from the unfair ravages of foreign competition.

After questioning the current international order, Diouf cited the proposal to establish economic unions in the franc zones of West and Central Africa as the perfect example of a project designed to weaken regional institutions in Africa. In his view, such unions are instruments for perpetuating the neocolonial trading system on the basis of captive African markets.

As an alternative, Diouf proposed a number of measures to reinforce the ECOWAS community. These would include measures to encourage the participation of all socioeconomic groups, the establishment of independent sources of finance for the community, and the adoption of supranational structures such as a West African Parliament. Diouf also sees the need to rationalize existing IGOs in West Africa under the umbrella of ECOWAS. Once these conditions are satisfied, economic integration should proceed through the implementation of multisectoral programs such as those currently being developed under ECA sponsorship.¹⁴

Idrissa Seck and Mamadou Lamine Thiam commented on the above interventions. Idrissa Seck referred to a study of donor perceptions conducted of behalf of the Global Coalition for

¹³ ECA, *"L'intégration économique en Afrique, situation et perspectives : le point de vue de la Commission Économique des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique,"* [E/ECA/CM.17/2], 21 p. [paper presented by Mbaye Diouf].

¹⁴ ECA's activities in support of regional integration are summarized in the synthesis report on Wednesday afternoon's activities.

Africa¹⁵ and drew the audience's attention to the persistent gulf between the "variable geometry" approach proposed by donors and the IGO-focused approach strongly championed by the ECA and the OAU. Although the latter are obliged to follow where heads of state have led through the adoption of treaties to establish regional institutions such as ECOWAS, international institutions tend to favour a more flexible approach and support any initiative involving more than two countries.

Mamadou Lamine Thiam, Program Director with the Federation of African Private Voluntary Organizations (Fédération des Organismes Volontaires Africains de Développement — FOVAD) deplored the small number of women and NGO representatives present at the conference. He drew attention to the weak political commitment of African states to regional integration and suggested that more attention be paid to the concerns of regional and subregional NGOs.

¹⁵ Idrissa Seck, *"Le résumé des points de vue des différents membres."* Global Coalition for Africa, Subcommittee on Regional Cooperation and Integration, November 1992, 13 p.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Plenary Session

The second plenary session, held on Tuesday, 12 January 1993, dealt with trade, economic policies, agriculture, and monetary integration. It was chaired by A. Sangowawa, Vice-President of the ADB; Achi Atsain and Sams Dine Sy were the rapporteurs.

The first paper was presented by Salomon Samen,¹⁶ who discussed the lessons of history for economic integration in West Africa. Samen demonstrated that the free movement of goods and factors, which has been the object of recent integration efforts, had already existed in precolonial Africa. Furthermore, the new nations of Francophone Africa had inherited numerous mechanisms for economic integration and cooperation at the time of independence. Notwithstanding this historical reality, and despite the expressed willingness of countries to form new economic groupings, the region became increasingly fragmented in the 3 decades following independence.

By the second half of the 1980s, the moribund state of existing groupings had been recognized, and this led to the search for new ways to promote integration and revitalize those groupings. Samen identified the economic unions envisaged for WAMU and CACEU as one possible solution. However, in Samen's view, the enhancement of regional integration through these schemes should not be taken as a substitute for the restoration of international competitiveness in the franc zone. For the new economic unions to work, responsible and effective supranational institutions must be established for these unions and the competitiveness of CACEU and WAMU member countries must be significantly improved on world markets.

Commentator Mike Obadan indicated that African governments were long ago convinced of the need for economic integration. The key question is why an organization such as ECOWAS, which is fully aware of the obstacles to regional integration, nonetheless remains incapable of overcoming them. Discussion around this issue included references to nationalist sentiment and divergent political interests.

The second paper, focusing on **trade in agricultural commodities**, was presented by Jean-Marc Pradelle,¹⁷ who described research on regional cereals markets conducted under the food-security program of the Club du Sahel and the CILSS. Plans for regional food-security in the Sahel were first put forward at the Mindelo Conference in 1986. However, Mindelo did not sufficiently address the issue of implementation, and there was a failure to appreciate the obstacles involved in defining food security along strictly Sahelian lines. Indeed, the Sahel is not

¹⁶ Salomon Samen, *"L'intégration économique dans les pays de l'UDEAC et de l'UMOA : leçons de l'histoire, fondements théoriques et perspectives pour les années 90s,"* 17 p.

¹⁷ Jean-Marc Pradelle and Serge Snrech, *"Sécurité alimentaire et développement agricole en Afrique de l'Ouest : qu'attendre de l'intégration régionale?"* 29 p.

a natural trading area because trade in foodstuffs occurs more naturally between the Sahel and Coastal states. Following the Lomé Seminar in 1989, the program was recast around subregional groupings that included both Sahelian and Coastal countries.

One of the main conclusions of the research on regional cereal markets was the existence of substantial informal trade flows, engendered by intercountry disparities in pricing policies. This informal trade, based on the import of cheap agricultural products on world markets, leads to market integration of a sort, and this trade is a boon to consumers. However, it does nothing to encourage local production. The situation seems unlikely to change because governments are heavily dependent on the taxation of imported food products. This makes it difficult for governments to agree on harmonized agricultural policies in the subregions, and it reduces their motivation to pursue regional integration around the production and trade of domestic foodstuffs.

Pradelle suggested several ways of promoting regional integration in agriculture:

- Enhancing the political influence of producers, through the constitution or reinforcement of peasant associations and business groups,
- In-depth research on regional issues such as migration, the agricultural potential of different regions, and infrastructural needs, and
- Well-targeted regional projects of a win-win nature for all parties in the short term — projects for the better exploitation of a common resource base or a common agricultural activity (river basin development, livestock sector development); networking activities bringing together researchers or business groups; or projects able to benefit from substantial economies of scale (satellite photography, specialized training centres).

Amadou Seck, the first commentator, cited Senegalese policy on the price of rice as an example of a policy handicapped by the actions of a neighbouring country because lower prices in Gambia lead to smuggling of rice into Senegal. Seck argued in favour of harmonizing food-security policies at the subregional level, with particular attention to the price of rice and exchange-rate policies. He feels that countries are being held hostage to large trading companies in matters of food policy; this state of affairs will continue in the absence of countervailing pressure groups, such as those arising from the empowerment of small producers.

The second commentator was Baba Dioum, who is a technical adviser in Senegal's Agricultural Policy Unit. He linked the research described in Pradelle's paper with the CILSS/Club du Sahel project to constitute a protected cereals market, and encourage greater agricultural cooperation in the Sahel. He reviewed the situation from the Nouakchott meeting in 1979. He then outlined the limitations of this approach. Echoing a point made by Pradelle, he reiterated one of the conclusions of the Lomé Conference in 1989 that the CILSS might not be the ideal forum for managing regional trade in cereals because this trade takes place predominantly between Coastal and Sahelian countries. A second limitation of the approach is that it restricts its focus to cereals, to the exclusion of other agricultural products. A broader perspective would have greater potential for generating trade balance among participating countries, whose agricultural complementarities are not limited to cereals.

Baba Dioum considers that the Agriculture Ministers' Conference,¹⁸ which he represents, provides in some ways a better framework than the CILSS for regional agricultural cooperation. The conference takes a pragmatic approach that is aimed at the progressive integration of agricultural markets through policy coordination on a product-by-product and sectoral basis and seeks to increase the competitiveness of the region on world markets.

In a presentation on economic policy, Ousmane Badiane¹⁹ identified what he feels to be an important omission in negotiations for regional integration, namely the dearth of interest in **macroeconomic and sectoral policies**. Such policies can have a considerable impact on regional trade, and he identified three areas requiring greater attention: monetary and exchange rate policies, trade liberalization, and sectoral policies. He argued that the preferential trade measures traditionally at the centre of regional integration strategies cannot compensate for inappropriate macroeconomic and sectoral policies, which may undermine the overall competitiveness of individual countries or of the region as a whole and have severe impacts on growth and intraregional trade.

Badiane presented the results of a Computerized General-Equilibrium Model (CGEM), applied to Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire to simulate the impact of macroeconomic policies on trade. By accounting for intersectoral interdependencies, the model demonstrates the negative impact of restrictive trade policies on regional competitiveness. Badiane presented simulations to show the potential boost in regional trade that might occur under various scenarios: greater openness to world markets, devaluation of the CFA, a more expansionary monetary policy, and improved terms of trade. Sectoral measures that might be used to buttress the impact of macroeconomic reforms include: further liberalization of marketing systems, the redirection of marketing systems toward regional markets, and measures to reduce the high cost of overland transportation in the region.

The two commentators, Jean Coussy and Laye Camara, acknowledged the originality of the paper and commended the author's modelling efforts. The strength of the author's contribution is to show how certain policy measures can produce unintended results in the aggregate. However, a degree of scepticism was advised regarding the detailed quantitative results: doubts were expressed about the accuracy of the database and about the appropriateness of the "full employment" hypothesis; the commentators also noted the absence of reliable estimates of substitution elasticities — for example, the demand elasticity of substitution between imported and domestically produced goods — in manipulating models of this sort.

¹⁸ The conference, organized at the invitation of the Senegalese government, was held between 18 and 20 March 1991. Representatives of 15 African countries and international organizations discussed projects on the establishment of a regional free-trade zone for grain, meat, and oilseeds. A network of experts was constituted. The conference proceedings were published in April 1991 under the leadership of Baba Dioum, who acted as general coordinator for the conference.

¹⁹ Ousmane Badiane, "Regional Integration in West Africa: The Importance of Country Macroeconomic and Sector Policies," 32 p. This paper was a simplified version of an earlier one.

Further caution was urged when drawing implications from the model for trade policy, in particular for the sort of protectionist policies that are often urged in support of regional economic integration. Although there is no doubt that protectionist policies have been a failure in the region, the reasons for this failure must be studied in greater depth than is possible using this kind of model. Criticism was levied at this particular model's failure to distinguish between industrial protection and other impediments to trade, such as the taxation of export crops, because the impact of such policies on regional trade was liable to differ in fundamental ways.

Jean Coussy invited the audience to reflect on the special role that South Africa and Nigeria might come to play as major hubs of regional integration in their respective regions. The exceptional oil and mineral wealth of these countries has made them important trading partners in the region. Having applied protectionist policies for many years, South Africa and Nigeria are now saddled with underutilized industrial capacity, which could be better exploited through greater access to subregional markets. However, neither South Africa nor Nigeria are presently able to compete on world markets for manufactured products, and the penetration of African markets would require the implementation of support policies such as subsidies, exchange-rate depreciation, or further protectionist measures of a regional nature. Under these conditions, any integration system revolving around these two countries is liable not to meet the expectations of most African countries.

David Cobham presented a paper on **monetary integration**,²⁰ written in collaboration with Peter Robson. This paper sought to apply to the African situation those lessons learned from the process of monetary integration in the European Community. The authors assessed the costs and benefits of various strategies for monetary integration. Their assessment showed that the benefits were the greatest in the case of full monetary integration and that the costs remained the same regardless of the strategy adopted.

Cobham and Robson pointed out that the theoretical benefits of monetary integration in West Africa would be limited because of the low degree of economic integration. However, monetary integration can itself be a vehicle for economic integration, and it would find its primary justification in the macroeconomic stability that it could help bring about. The authors then addressed some of the preconditions for implementing monetary integration in the region: discrepancies in the balance-of-payments situation of different countries must be resolved through agreements on appropriate exchange-rate parities or adjustment mechanisms, the status and objectives of the central bank must be defined, and fiscal policies must be harmonized.

The best strategy for monetary integration would depend on the degree of commitment of countries in the region. With sufficient commitment from all parties, monetary integration can be achieved without too much difficulty. The process would require a preparatory phase of economic convergence, which might take anything from 6 months to 5 years, and the creation of a common currency to be issued by a regional central bank. Should the political will to

²⁰ David Cobham and Peter Robson, "Monetary Integration in Africa: A Deliberately European Perspective," 30 p.

establish such a bank be lacking, a less ambitious scheme could be based on the stabilization of exchange-rate fluctuations through the use of a "reference currency" (as done in Europe around the German Mark) combined with measures to enhance the convertibility of currencies in the region.

Full monetary integration in the region could be achieved with or without the linkage of regional currencies to a foreign "peg." Cobham and Robson advocate a link to the ECU to extend the current pegging system between the CFA franc and the French franc. Such a formula would impose greater monetary discipline on the union and reduce the need for macroeconomic convergence as a precondition for establishing the union. The formula could include foreign support to guarantee currency convertibility.

Commentators Mohammed Mah'Moud and Rohinton Medhora supported the basic ideas expressed in the paper and agreed that monetary integration could precede economic integration and be envisaged without prior harmonization of economic policies on all fronts.

In their view, the main stumbling block is likely to be the overwhelming economic weight that Nigeria would have in any region-wide monetary union. Current economic policies and structures are markedly different between Nigeria and its partners, and those differences would need to be well understood as part of any process to extend monetary integration beyond the franc zone.

Lastly, Mah'Moud and Medhora questioned the desirability of too rigid a link to the ECU. They advocated some sort of flexibility in the pegging mechanism. Otherwise, the substantial benefits to be gleaned from such a link would be bought at the cost of a loss in flexibility to adjust using the exchange-rate mechanism.

Panel 1: Trade

The first working group sessions began on the afternoon of Tuesday, 12 January. Panel 1, chaired by George Obiozor, addressed four fundamental issues: structural adjustment, intracommunity trade, parallel trade, and foreign investment. Mohammed Haddar was the rapporteur.

Cyril Daddieh asked whether **Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs)** would accelerate or hinder the integration process.²¹ The potential for SAPs to act as a catalyst for regional integration resides in the emphasis these programs place on strengthening international competitiveness through trade liberalization and currency devaluation. Through the correction of economic imbalances and distortions, SAPs could lead to economic restructuring and create a macroeconomic climate more conducive to the increased mobility of goods and factors of production.

Unfortunately SAPs tend to be conceived in a national context and have no regard for broader regional issues. Trade liberalization therefore proceeds with no regard for regional objectives of industrial and agricultural development. The lack of policy coordination among countries encourages fraud and informal trade in imported goods at the expense of trade in regional products. The same problem characterizes exchange-rate reforms, which have followed diametrically different paths in French- and English-speaking countries. The current situation cries out for some sort of regional policy coordination.

SAPs have failed to stem the economic crisis, and there is little room for increased trade and investment in such an environment. Beset by fiscal deficits, governments tend to abandon regional projects and fall further into arrears in their contributions to regional institutions. The social consequences of economic crisis can also impede integration by generating a climate of violence and xenophobia that results from increased poverty.

Commentator George Larbi recognized that structural adjustment is a precondition for economic recovery, but he advocated the design of SAPs more in tune with the region's aspirations for greater economic integration. Trade barriers could be relaxed more aggressively on products of regional interest. For SAPs to bolster regional integration, a coordinated effort is needed between the international sponsors of structural adjustment (the World Bank and the IMF) and the regional institutions that have made a priority of regional integration (the ECA and the OAU, in particular). The African Development Bank could conceivably act as some sort of intermediary between the two groups of institutions.

²¹ Cyril K Daddieh, "Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and Regional Integration in West Africa: Help or Hindrance?," 22 p.

Trade issues were discussed in detail in Alléchi M'Bet's paper.²² Intraregional trade in West Africa accounts for about 6% of total trade. Obstacles to increasing this proportion begin with the inability of regional products to compete on global markets, where prices are lower or quality superior. However, there exist numerous other barriers to trade and factor mobility, which could lend themselves to policy reform. These barriers include poor transport infrastructures, frequent road checks by customs officers, hassles at border crossings, nonstandardized documentation and tariff nomenclatures, nontariff barriers, and a costly and ineffective telecommunications system.

Commentators Kate Meagher and Achi Atsain thought that M'Bet's paper had not placed sufficient emphasis on the overvaluation of the CFA franc as an explanation of the region's inability to compete with foreign imports. The need to harmonize tax policies and their impact on production costs was also mentioned.

Kate Meagher presented a paper on **parallel trade**²³ that criticised the frequently held view of parallel trade as a possible answer to some of the obstacles to trade. From a review of the literature, she described the organization of parallel trade as a circuitous flow of illegal exports that generate the foreign exchange needed to engage in illegal imports of other goods. Most parallel trade involves the exchange of goods imported from the rest of the world and traded to profit from price differences due to divergent economic policies in neighbouring countries. Private fortunes and public privileges are based on such trade, and they are defended through coalitions of powerful commercial and political interests. These interest groups are opposed to genuine regional integration, which would put an end to the opportunities for arbitrage that sustain their fortunes. Meagher was thus very sceptical about the contribution of parallel trade to regional integration: such trade contributes little to the exchange of regionally produced goods and is based on political coalitions fundamentally opposed to regional integration.

Meagher's paper was commented on by John Igué and Ali Mansoor. Igué pointed out the need for a better understanding of parallel trade in economies that are heavily reliant on such trade, notably Gambia and Benin.²⁴ In his view, the joint management of trade between Nigeria and border countries such as Benin and Niger could give rise to new forms of economic cooperation between those countries and merits special attention from policymakers.

Mansoor suggested that parallel trade is the result of price distortions and therefore constitutes an economically inefficient form of trade in comparison with trade based on

²² Alléchi M'Bet and Aïssata Camara, *"Groupements économiques et commerce intra-africain : une analyse des obstacles à l'intensification des échanges de produits manufacturés en Afrique de l'Ouest,"* 69 p.

²³ Kate Meagher, "Informal Integration or Economic Subversion? The Development and Organization of Parallel Trade in Sub-Saharan Africa," 29 p.

²⁴ Cf. John O Igué and Bio G Soule, *L'État entrepôt au Bénin. Commerce informel ou solution à la crise?*, Paris, Karthala, 1992, 216 p.

comparative advantage. He thus defended the liberalization of regional trade as a means of rationalizing regional trade.

The fourth issue to be addressed in this panel was **foreign investment**. This was discussed in a paper by Gerald Blakey.²⁵ Net foreign direct investment flows in many Sub-Saharan African countries is now negative, and Africa faces intense competition from other developing countries and industrialized countries in its search for investment resources. Blakey wondered whether integration could bolster the region's position with regard to foreign investment.

Blakey described a survey of European business people involved in Africa. This survey showed the interest of the private sector — and large firms in particular — in regional integration and cooperation. The survey results included some surprises, among them the revelation that nontariff barriers are a far greater concern than tariff barriers. The fundamental issue for these business people was that of economic and political stability. Asked to rate the importance of 10 variables in the pursuit of regional integration, they rated political stability most significant. Monetary stability and currency convertibility were also of great concern, as was the unrestricted flow of labour between countries.

Commentator Frank Ofei indicated that ECOWAS would like to establish a Regional Investment Code. He pointed out the usefulness of surveys to identify the issues of greatest importance to investors. The study confirmed his assessment that the main concerns of business people are those of stability, transparency, and security. For him, the challenge is not only to attract foreign investors but to ensure their contribution as partners in the integration process.

In concluding the session, the panel chairperson stressed the need for a strong regional institution capable of coordinating structural adjustment programs across the region, directing negotiations on trade liberalization, managing parallel trade more effectively, coordinating investment codes, and making better use of international investment.

²⁵ G Gerald Blakey, "Regional Integration in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Implications of Direct Foreign Private Investment," 16 p.

Panel 2: Monetary Integration and Economic Cooperation

The second panel of the day examined a variety of issues from the conference agenda: the desirability of monetary integration, options for monetary integration, energy, and the comparative experiences of SADCC and ECOWAS. It was chaired by Ousmane Ouédraogo, Deputy Governor of BCEAO. Mohammed Mah'Moud was rapporteur.

The first paper, by Ben Aigbokhan,²⁶ assessed the desirability of **monetary union** among ECOWAS countries and was based on the theory of optimum currency areas and European experiences. The key characteristics of an optimum currency area include: a high degree of factor mobility, the openness of each country's economy, a high level of product diversification, limited susceptibility to external shocks, a suitable degree of policy integration, and wage-price flexibility. These conditions do not apply very well in the ECOWAS area, particularly as compared with the European Community (EC), which tends to be used as a model for monetary integration. The question is, therefore, whether monetary integration in the subregion is desirable.

Commentators John Anyanwu and David Cobham agreed that none of the criteria for an optimum currency area were met within ECOWAS, but they disagreed with the recipe of inaction prescribed by Aigbokhan. In their view, the concept of an optimal currency area is a difficult one to apply because it is hard to define the minimum conditions for a viable single-currency area. Even the EC would fail to qualify in all respects as an optimal currency area, especially if one were to focus on some of the subgroupings within the community. The relevance of the approach depends largely on the nature of the benefits that are perceived to arise from monetary integration. If the benefits are principally those of increased monetary discipline and stability, then it may not matter how "optimal" or "suboptimal" the proposed area might be.

The second paper, by Rohinton Medhora,²⁷ reviewed **the experience of the West African Monetary Union (WAMU)** and examined the applicability of WAMU's arrangements to the larger and more heterogeneous area represented by the 16 ECOWAS countries.

Long-term economic performance in WAMU countries has been relatively satisfactory, compared with that of similar countries — growth rates, inflation, and monetary and exchange-rate stability have, at times, been enviable. This may be attributed to various factors, including the discipline imposed by the fixed exchange rate, the existence of a relatively independent, supranational central bank, and the French guarantee of convertibility for the CFA franc (CFAF). Furthermore, the members of the union have generally subscribed both to the letter and to the spirit of monetary integration.

²⁶ B. E. Aigbokhan, "Optimum Currency Areas and Monetary Integration in West Africa : Lessons from the European Community," 22 p.

²⁷ Rohinton Medhora, "Monetary Integration in West Africa : Lessons from the UMOA."

However, WAMU was not equipped to deal with fiscal reform or with the general economic mismanagement that occurred when the 1970s boom came to an end. Despite its statutory role in the region, the BCEAO has been handicapped by incomplete access to information and by incomplete cooperation of all its members in matters of fiscal coordination. By diluting the foreign-exchange constraint, the French guarantee of convertibility may have postponed much-needed fiscal adjustment, and the historic symbol of franc-zone stability — the unchanged peg — became an impediment to economic adjustment.

The major lesson to be learned from the experience of the franc zone is that a supranational central bank should be truly supranational — more so than BCEAO has been to date. Member countries should be prepared to face onerous reporting and participation requirements, and some form of fiscal federalism would be in order. Rules on matters such as reserve pooling, the distribution of seigniorage rights, and access to international credit should be transparently clear and strictly enforced. Finally, although the advantages of pegging to an external anchor currency (such as the French franc or the ECU) are clear, the advantages of flexibility to be gained from a managed float or crawling-peg regime should not be discounted.

Properly designed and managed, a monetary union for West Africa could offer considerable advantages to its members: a stable and apolitical monetary policy, financial stability, and lower transaction costs. Such measures cannot, however, substitute for sensible economic policy and adjustment efforts.

Commentators Youssouf Dembelé, Abdoulaye Diagne, Sams Dine Sy and Henri Josserand shared the author's views on the advantages of monetary integration and asked about some of the operational issues. For both Diagne and Sy, enhanced monetary integration in the region meant using the franc zone as the foundation and extending it to cover some of the Anglophone countries. This would require some prior degree of policy convergence, particularly with regard to inflation, which remains relatively high in a number of Anglophone countries. Fiscal policies would also need to be harmonized and jointly managed. Experience in WAMU suggests that the adoption of an external "anchor" (in this case, the French franc) has been a key to stability of the monetary union. In an enhanced West African monetary union, that role would probably best be played by the ECU.

Dembelé argued in favour of fiscal federalism and drew attention to the role that the West African Development Bank should play in financing regional development projects. He also defended the need to strengthen regional money markets to reduce pressures on the central bank in the financing of public-sector deficits.

Dembelé and Josserand both commented on the issue of devaluing the CFA franc. Dembelé argued that whereas the benefits of devaluation are uncertain, its negative effects (including inflation and further devaluation) are both certain and immediate. For Josserand, the most damaging aspect of the prevailing situation was the continuing uncertainty. He felt the WAMU countries should either decide how to go about devaluing the CFA, or learn to live in the shadow

of neighbouring countries that are free to devalue whenever they want to gain a competitive advantage.²⁸

Joseph Sarfoh's paper on **energy production and consumption**²⁹ identifies hydropower as the natural energy base offering the best prospects for satisfying West Africa's future electricity needs. He suggested that the interconnection of the region through hydroelectrical schemes could provide a catalyst for political and economic unification. He cited the experience of the European Steel and Coal Community as an example of such a catalyst in Europe.

The author explained the lack of progress in developing hydropower in West Africa by referring to the large capital requirements and long gestation periods of such projects. Current economic conditions do not facilitate such investments. Occasional bouts of drought have also been a discouraging factor.

Commentators Alioune Fall and A. Sesan Ayodele agreed with Sarfoh's thesis and supported the case for hydrosupstitution of energy in West Africa. However, they felt that other energy matters should not be neglected, in particular the problems of access to wood fuel, deforestation, and the need for alternative sources of energy because of reduced supplies of hydropower in the dry season. Energy planning in the region should envisage optimal ways of combining different energy sources and should identify ways of pooling resources for energy development.

The last paper of the panel, by Fernando Cardoso,³⁰ was a **comparative study of ECOWAS and SADCC**. The Southern Africa Development Cooperation Conference (SADCC) has now become SADC (Southern Africa Development Community). Cardoso emphasized the similarities between the two regional groupings: the low levels of development, the weakness of commercial arrangements at the regional level, and the presence of a major power (South Africa and Nigeria, respectively) amidst a large group of smaller countries. Basing his argument on the SADCC experience, the author stressed the need to surpass the usual focus of regional integration schemes on trade policy and address political and strategic issues of common concern. Cardoso drew attention to the impediments facing regional integration through trade because conflicts of interest are inherent in this approach. He recommended that efforts be focused on projects more easily capable of mobilizing domestic support, such as the regional infrastructure projects supported under SADCC.

²⁸ The CFA franc was finally devalued by 50% on 12 January 1994.

²⁹ Joseph Sarfoh, "Energy Production and Use as Strategy for Regional Integration: The Case of Hydro Substitution in West Africa," 13 p.

³⁰ Fernando Jorge Cardoso, "SADC for SADCC: A "C" for Change (West Versus Southern African Integration)," 16 p.

Commentator Walter Kennes supported the author's emphasis on political and strategic considerations. He drew a parallel with the early history of European integration under the Marshall Plan (1948–1950). Recent analyses consider the most important aspect of the Marshall Plan to have been the associated conditionality of increased cooperation among countries. These conditions stimulated trade liberalization through the reduction of quantitative restrictions and led the way to greater regional integration in Europe. The creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the second milestone of regional integration in Europe, was also motivated by political considerations aimed at the integration of German industry in a supranational framework.

Panel 3: Agriculture

Panel 3 covered four themes: river basin development, livestock, fisheries, and the environment. The proceedings were chaired by Mohammed El Habib Ly, Director General of the Institut sénégalais de recherches agricoles (ISRA, Senegalese Institute for Agricultural Research). The rapporteurs were Mamadou Sidibé and Ola Smith.

The first speaker, Mahamadou Maïga,³¹ presented a paper on **river basin development along the Senegal River**. Maïga suggested the cause of regional integration could be advanced by building on the Organisation de la mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal (OMVS, Organisation for Senegal River Development). Currently charged with technical matters and the mobilization of external funding, the OMVS should grow into a policymaking body that involves the four riverine states (Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, and Guinea). Three issues are addressed in the paper: appropriate strategies for the development of agriculture and irrigation following major dam construction on the River; new opportunities for development in the energy, mining, and industrial sectors; and river transport.

In the choice of strategy for irrigated agriculture, the author advocated a modest but realistic development program based on a participatory approach. He suggested a continued role for traditional forms of recession agriculture (cropping based on the retreat of flood waters) in the short and medium term. He proposed a concerted approach to the management of river levels from the Manantali dam to secure the best combination of benefits from recession agriculture, the extension of irrigation, and hydroelectricity. Better collaboration among the four governments could also lead to improved measures for self-sufficiency in cereals through greater geographical specialization. This would involve greater attention to rice production in Guinea and Mali and greater focus on traditional cereals (millet, sorghum, and maize) in the Senegal River basin.

Outside agriculture, Maïga noted that a considerable proportion of the mineral resources in the subregion can be found in the Senegal River basin. He identified a number of prospects in the mining and industrial sectors in the basin area over the medium and long term. However, rail and river transport infrastructures in the riverine states are old and dilapidated, and road transport is very expensive. He encouraged the OMVS-member countries to revitalize river transport as a select mode of transport in the region. Now that river levels can be regulated by the Manantali Dam, some 40% of the goods imported to and exported from Mali could be transported on the river.

Commentators Suruwa Jaiteh and Mamadou Makhtar Sylla stressed the role that agricultural development based on improved water management could play in regional integration if regional planning favoured integrated agricultural development.

³¹ Mahamadou Maïga, "Pour une intégration des structures de production des pays riverains du fleuve Sénégal (Guinée, Mali, Mauritanie et Sénégal) à l'horizon de 2011," 20 p.

The second paper of the panel was presented by Seydou Sidibé³² on the subject of **livestock**. Sidibé reviewed past policies and described recent initiatives for increased regional integration in the livestock sector: the Conference of West and Central African Ministers of Agriculture; the USAID/World Bank action plan to liberalize livestock trade in the "central corridor" (consisting mainly of Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Côte d'Ivoire, but also Ghana, Togo, and Benin in certain circumstances); strategic thinking in the CILSS and the Communauté économique du bétail et de la viande (CEBV, Economic Community for Meat and Livestock); and the action plans emanating from regional seminars in Nouakchott and Abidjan in March and June of 1992. Sidibé reviewed the various recommendations that emanated from these meetings to strengthen the livestock sector in the central corridor.

Commentators Roger Moussa Tall and Ola Smith enquired into the true export potential of livestock products from the Sahel to the Coast. On the demand side, the ongoing substitution of poultry products for meat could reverse the direction of trade between the two subregions. Burkina Faso already consumes more eggs from Coastal states than from the Sahel. On the supply side, Smith wondered whether Sahelian countries, handicapped by fragile ecosystems, had the potential to become reliable and competitive suppliers of meat products. If they are not, then no amount of government intervention will prevent these products from being imported from elsewhere. According to estimates in the paper, Sahelian countries will be capable of covering only 20% of the deficit in meat products in Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Benin by the year 2000, and this does not include the deficit in important countries such as Ghana and Nigeria. Clarification of such issues should permit a better assessment of the sector's true potential for stimulating regional integration.

The next sector to be discussed was **fisheries**.³³ In his paper, Ade Olomola argued for better management of the fisheries sector through regional cooperation. According to Olomola, the need for such cooperation has been recognized for some time, but it has not been acted on to any substantial degree. Efforts have concentrated on the reinforcement of national capabilities, and notable progress has been made. However, there is a gap between actual and potential output. Furthermore, African countries still depend on foreign fleets for about half the total catch and rely largely on foreign expertise for management of the fisheries resource base. Cooperation on a regional basis could help reduce this dependency syndrome and lead to better management of Africa's abundant fisheries resources. He noted that there are numerous examples of shared stocks that could be better managed collaboratively, and he stated that there were opportunities in the diversity found in the region in terms of resource endowment, technical skills, and the structure of the fishing industry.

³² Seydou Sidibé and Henri Josserand, *"Échanges de produits de l'élevage : problématique et contribution de plusieurs initiatives actuelles à l'intégration régionale,"* 17 p.

³³ Ade S Olomola, "A Framework for Regional Cooperation to Enhance African Fisheries Research and Development," 23 p.

Olomola pointed to the Regional Project for Improving Postharvest Utilization of Artisanal Fish Catches in West Africa, which began in 1987, as an example of the sort of collaboration that is possible. The project has supported the exchange of experiences in postharvest matters through networking, practical training, and seminars.

Other areas that could benefit from collaboration include joint ventures in fish production and fisheries research. The latter deserves special attention. Collaboration is possible in several areas of research: better management of shared stocks, identification of appropriate regulatory measures, comparative analyses of artisanal fishing, reduction of postharvest losses, and sharing of market intelligence. Olomola concluded by proposing three types of measures to reinforce fisheries research through enhanced collaboration: support for national research capacities, strengthening of the African Regional Aquaculture Centre (ARAC) in Nigeria, and the establishment of a regional fisheries research unit.

Commentators Tické Ndiaye and Jean-Paul Ferland agreed on the need for better coordination of national measures in the fisheries sector. Ferland suggested that priority should be given to research and to the design of institutional mechanisms to support fisheries research at the regional level.

Moustapha Kébé, the third commentator, felt there was no lack of will to collaborate. However, the means of achieving such cooperation have yet to be fully defined. He noted that the new powers accorded to coastal states by the new Law of the Sea have not yet been translated into genuine control of fisheries resources in these countries' exclusive economic zones. Thirty years after independence, there is a massive presence of foreign fleets in African waters and a lack of effective sovereignty over national fisheries.

Many efforts have nonetheless been made in the direction of greater regional cooperation. Kébé cited the 22-member Ministerial Conference of Atlantic States (*Conférence ministérielle des États riverains de l'océan Atlantique*), which aims to set up a subregional database on marine fisheries. Existing forms of cooperation can serve as a foundation on which to build.

The next two papers dealt with **the environment**. The first, by Ademola T Salau,³⁴ began with a review of global environmental problems: the greenhouse effect, the destruction of the ozone layer, and the loss of biodiversity. The paper focused on those issues that require a regional approach in West Africa: the need for improved energy policies (with particular regard for deforestation), environmental issues surrounding major dam projects, the development of sustainable farming practices in an area noted for its fragile soils, the control of industrial pollution, and the reduction of population growth (which is the highest in the world and has become a significant cause of natural-resource degradation).

³⁴ Ademola T Salau, "The Global Environmental Crisis and its Challenge to Regional Integration in West Africa," 21 p. In the author's absence, the paper was presented by his wife.

The authors of the second paper³⁵ were represented by André Vuillet and Amsatou Niang, who identified the major environmental challenges in West Africa: drought and desertification, population growth and poverty, and the absence of environmental concerns in the policymaking. The authors described the activities of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, which has established four commissions and eight regional networks. These groups aim to facilitate cooperation in areas such as: environmental management, the use and dissemination of environmental information, and research on issues of common concern. The use of satellite remote sensing was cited as an example of a region-wide initiative that could greatly facilitate the coordination of environmental measures at the regional level. The authors stressed the need for an approach that takes into account the frequently divergent political and economic interests of people at all levels of the environmental problematique, from the village to the subregional or regional level. The authors concluded that if environmental and population issues are not swiftly brought under control, West African regionalization will occur *de facto* as huge numbers of people migrate to flee the encroaching desert in a desperate bid for survival.

Commentator Pierre-Pol Vincke spoke about Senegal's recent experience in developing the left bank of the Senegal River basin, and he used this as an example of integrated development that incorporated social, environmental, and economic dimensions and could be generalized to neighbouring countries. The program is based on the management of natural and human resources with the aim of ensuring the sustainable use of the environment, including woodlands, farmlands, pastures, and fisheries. This strategy includes an innovative land-use policy designed to empower local groups in resource management. Vincke felt the Senegalese experience could serve as a basis for interstate discussions aimed at harmonizing development strategies on both sides of the Senegal River.

³⁵ Guy Debailleul, Eric Grenon, Muimana-Muende Kalala, and André Vuillet, *"La dimension régionale des défis environnementaux en Afrique de l'Ouest : d'un besoin d'harmonisation des stratégies d'action à l'expression d'une volonté politique conséquente,"* 20 p.

EDUCATION, CULTURE, INFORMATION, AND RESEARCH

Plenary Session

The plenary session held on Wednesday, 13 January, was chaired by Amadou Makhtar Mbow, former Director General of UNESCO: Georges Madiéga, Babacar Diop, and E.K. Ogundowole were the rapporteurs. The issues discussed were: higher education, scientific and technical development, culture, information, and communications.

William Njume Ekane³⁶ spoke of **higher education** and the contribution that regional cooperation could make to addressing resource constraints and reducing the isolation of the universities from the rest of the world and from each other. He examined the political, financial, and linguistic barriers to such cooperation and suggested that an African commission on higher education be set up to manage interuniversity collaboration.

Commentators Joel B. Babalola and P.O. Okunola firmly supported Ekane's suggestions as innovative and relevant. They also noted the advantages to be gained from the harmonization of curricula, the mutual recognition of diplomas in different countries, collaboration in research, sharing of documentation, and joint teacher training. However, they wondered whether the proposed commission on higher education was really necessary. They pointed out that most interuniversity cooperation can be managed through existing institutions, such as the Association of African Universities, which was not mentioned in Ekane's paper. They were also concerned that the proposed commission might deprive individual universities of some of their autonomy, and they warned of difficulties in coordinating higher education when existing systems are so diversified. It was felt there was more to be gained in the short term from modest schemes focused on exchanges of teachers, students, and trainees.

Edwin A Gyasi³⁷ discussed the constraint to development represented by low levels of **science and technology** in industry and weak scientific and technological capacity. After identifying the historical and structural impediments to scientific and technological progress in West Africa, Gyasi suggested corrective measures and stressed the need for increased regional cooperation. Suggestions included: encouraging greater use of bilingualism in the educational system, creating a supranational structure for the coordination of science and technology, establishing a network of technopoles, and providing enhanced status for women in research and higher education.

Commentators Ousmane Kane, Alfred Boryor, and Michael Bassey asked whether one should really envisage the creation of new institutions when there are already several science and technology institutes in the region, including the African Regional Centre for Technology

³⁶ William Njume Ekane, "Regional Cooperation and Higher Education," 14 p.

³⁷ Edwin A Gyasi, "Towards a Model for Integrating and Popularizing Science and Technology in West Africa," 23 p.

(ARCT), the West African Rice Development Association (WARDA), the Regional Centre for Solar Energy (CRES), and the Science and Technology unit in ECOWAS. It was felt that the rationalization and reinforcement of existing institutions should be the first priority.

The next speaker, Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka,³⁸ also tackled the issue of technology. Based on a study of Latin American countries and Pacific Rim countries in Asia, Oyelaran-Oyeyinka attributed Africa's economic decline to technological stagnation and a failure to master imported technologies. He noted that rapid growth in the newly industrialized countries had been due principally to increased factor productivity as a result of technological progress. He emphasized the importance of indigenous capabilities for the manufacture of machine tools and equipment, and he bemoaned the high dependence of the metallurgy sector in Africa on the outside world for spare parts, maintenance, and quality control.

This paper was also commented on by Kane, Boryor, and Bassey. The commentators recognized the topicality of the paper. However, they felt that the causes of technological stagnation in Africa go beyond those identified in the paper and warrant a deeper, more historical, analysis. They noted the absence of any proposals for strengthening technological capabilities in Africa. Ousmane Kane added that such capabilities are a precondition for economic progress under regional integration. He called for the formulation of a long-term strategy to reinforce technological capabilities and for the articulation of science and technology policy in every sector of economic and social intervention.

The role of **cultural factors** in integration was discussed in a paper by Stanislas S. Adotevi.³⁹ Adotevi described the process of disintegration currently undermining the nation-states of West Africa. He perceived the failure to construct a new economic space at the regional level to be symptomatic of the weak foundations underlying regional integration efforts. In his view, it is only by rediscovering their own history and culture that Africans can reinvent a sense of patriotism and belonging that transcends national borders. He reviewed the "false solutions" that have stifled initiative and paralysed thought with regard to regional integration: the reduction of integration to its mere political or economic aspects, the deification of nation-states, and the pursuit of integration strictly from the top down and with no regard for ongoing processes in society at large. In Adotevi's view, such approaches disregard the cultural foundations critical to any valid integration scheme. The very notion of the postcolonial state, with precise borders and equality of status among states, is profoundly alien to the historical and cultural traditions of Africa. Lacking such historical and cultural roots, the postcolonial states are incapable of opening up without collapsing. Under these conditions, only a return to African traditions can ensure sustainability. Adotevi concluded by indicating that an unofficial process of regional

³⁸ Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, "Technological Capability, Structural Transformation and West African Integration," 27 p.

³⁹ Stanislas S. Adotevi, "*De l'échec des tentatives d'intégration économique artificielle à la définition des conditions de possibilité d'une intégration régionale viable*," 14 p.

integration is already happening in any case, not through the reconstruction of existing states but through new channels that bypass the state altogether.

Souleymane Bachir Diagne agreed that integration should be based on sound cultural foundations. However, he was wary of idealizing the "informal" networks and trade mechanisms that sometimes have little to do with the cultural affinities on which regional integration might be built. He called for research to distinguish between forms of solidarity conducive to integration and ethnic groupings that would be the last to promote the elimination of geographic borders, from which they have learned to profit by smuggling and arbitrage. Diagne also considers Adotevi too dismissive of the role of the state because the state can play a positive role in boosting trade by implementing appropriate regulations and infrastructure. He concurred with Adotevi's view that the nation-state will need to be reexamined from every point of view, through a widening of political space by regional integration and a redefinition of new spaces to "recapture" territorial constructs defined by the relative homogeneity of their populations and economic realities.

Amady Aly Dieng would have liked to see greater attention to certain financial and social factors in explaining the failure of regional integration. He provided as an example the difficulty of reducing trade barriers when, as is the case in the region, a high percentage of budget revenue is accounted for by customs duties. Dieng believes that researchers preoccupied with regional integration should delve more deeply into the social structure of West African states to identify the forces whose interests either support or impede integration. He observed that researchers with an interest in regional integration tend to forget the process of disintegration currently threatening the viability of certain nation states in West Africa and the implications — both negative and positive — that this could have for regional integration. Dieng concluded by calling for in-depth studies of social and political dynamics to be undertaken in West African countries.

The final two papers to be presented dealt with the subjects of **information and communications**. The first paper, by W. Olabode Aiyepku,⁴⁰ described the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science (ARCIS) in Ibadan and the École de Bibliothécaires, Archivistes et Documentalistes (EBAD, School for librarians, archivists and documentalists) in Dakar as rare examples of regional cooperation in higher education in West Africa. He called for a thorough study of information needs and information systems in West Africa and was joined in this suggestion by commentators Mohamed Fadhel Diagne and Antoine Bankolé.

The commentators focused on information needs of special relevance in the promotion of regional integration. Diagne stressed the need for multilingual facilities for the training of information managers in West Africa; whereas, Bankolé emphasized the special importance of information systems on economics, trade, and jurisprudence. Bankolé suggested that ECOWAS

⁴⁰ W Olabode Aiyepku, "Integrative and Value-Added Properties of Information in Space and Time," 10 p.

and WAMU should promote the establishment of appropriate information networks to collect and disseminate these types of information.

The last paper in the session, by Babacar Touré,⁴¹ discussed the place of journalism in developing a popular culture favourable to regional integration. Through the use of national languages in rural areas, the media has a special role to play in reaching populations whose geographical and linguistic base usually crosses national borders. Touré successively reviewed the place of the press, television, and radio as instruments of communication to cover both national and regional space in West Africa.

The commentators broached more specific issues. Mame-Less Camara spoke of the need for communicators in border areas to inculcate a culture of peace; Chérif-Elvalide Sèye pointed to the crucial role of information as part of the democratic process; and Jacques Habib Sy submitted proposals for the establishment and support of national-language newspapers, the reduction of publishing costs, and the liberalization of the media.

Before adjourning the session, A.M. Mbow commented on the interrelatedness of the ideas presented and reiterated the importance of higher education, and education in general, for the development and unification of the region. He emphasized the importance of knowledge and sociocultural phenomena, and he pointed to the reinforcement of research in science and technology as a precondition for progress in the region.

⁴¹ Babacar Touré, *"Le rôle de la presse dans le processus d'intégration régionale à la base,"* 8 p.

Forum of Research Institutions

On Wednesday afternoon, a forum was organized of research institutions involved in regional integration. The chairperson was G.R. Bourrier, Regional Director of IDRC, who began by identifying the forum's objectives: to help improve research coordination, and to examine how best to structure and support research and dissemination of information on regional integration. Babacar Fall and Fatou Sow were the rapporteurs.

IDRC representative Réal Lavergne⁴² presented a background paper that situated the issues covered in the conference in relation to IDRC's "research front" on regional integration and cooperation in West Africa. This IDRC initiative takes for granted the need for greater regional integration and cooperation, but it considers critical and rigorous debate of strategic options and priorities as a condition for progress.

The paper provides an inventory of research issues under four main headings, similar to those used in structuring the conference:

- The institutional framework,
- Economic integration,
- Social and political dimensions, and
- The generation and dissemination of knowledge.

IDRC's approach to supporting research in this area will not be limited by any particular thematic focus. The focus will rather be on the reinforcement of research systems for work on regional integration. The aim will be to strength endogenous research capacity in a sustainable fashion around major empirical and strategic issues.

Regional integration is a new area of intervention for IDRC. The Centre's support strategy for research will draw on the results of the conference and of the national seminars on integration that preceded it. In this, IDRC will seek to collaborate with other donors involved in supporting research on regional integration. In preparation for the conference, IDRC produced an inventory of current or planned research activities on regional integration. This inventory was distributed to participants and will hopefully facilitate research collaboration.⁴³

Boubacar Barry reviewed the activities leading up to the conference and proposed a series of follow-up activities. He explained that the conference was the work of a whole scientific

⁴² Réal Lavergne, "Regional Integration in West Africa: A Background Paper for IDRC's Research Front on Regional Integration in West Africa," 18 p.

⁴³ Momar-Coumba Diop, Boubacar Barry, and Réal Lavergne, "Inventory of Research Initiatives in Matters of Regional Integration in West Africa." The inventory was based on a selection of records from a data bank currently being set up at IDRC. This data bank comprises recent, current, or proposed research initiatives, arranged in alphabetical order by institution.

community whose obligation was to ensure appropriate follow-up. He felt that considerable knowledge had been assembled through the national seminars, and he suggested that this material be published in two volumes, one in English and the other in French, the first covering the Lagos and Accra seminars, and the second covering the Dakar, Abidjan, and Ouagadougou seminars. The conference proceedings should also be published, though Barry suggested that the papers be carefully selected to ensure the overall quality of the proposed volume. He suggested that a follow-up committee be set up to coordinate these initiatives. Finally, he indicated that the Institut de Recherche pour l'Intégration de la Sénégambie (IRIS, Research Institute for the Integration of Senegambia), of which he is the founding Director, was prepared to collaborate in every way possible to support research on regional integration.

Achi Atsain presented the work program of the West African Economics Associations (WAEA), of which he is the President. The WAEA, which maintains close ties with the ECOWAS Secretariat, regards regional integration as a priority area of intervention. It recently organized two workshops, in Lomé and Abidjan, to define its program of activities. These workshops brought together researchers and decision-makers and yielded an eight-point research program,⁴⁴ which was distributed to Conference participants. The eight points were:

- The rationalization of international government organizations (IGOs),
- The impact of SAPs on regional integration,
- Structural change in the world economy and its impact on ECOWAS countries,
- Obstacles to the implementation of IGO programs, resolutions, and decisions,
- Parallel trade in the regional community,
- The creation of a single monetary zone,
- The funding problems of IGOs, and
- The harmonization of legislative frameworks.

Mahamane Brah introduced the Regional Integration Promotion Unit for West and Central Africa (CINERGIE), which he directs. CINERGIE is housed in the ADB, as a joint project of the ADB, the OECD, the Club du Sahel, and the CILSS. In Brah's words, the seed of integration has been sown many times, but it has been prevented from growing by a hostile environment. The aim of CINERGIE is to permit that seed to grow by fostering dialogue and exchange of information among the major institutions involved — governments, regional institutions, the donor community, and civil society. Brah spoke of the special challenges to research in Africa, where researchers and decision-makers tend to operate in different spheres and where decision-makers often fail to take scientific information into account. Part of CINERGIE's mandate is to encourage increased dialogue between researchers and decision-makers.

ADB representative Laye Camara indicated the ADB's desire to reinforce the fabric of regional institutions in Africa. Missions had already been dispatched to Central Africa, and

⁴⁴ Achi Atsain, *"Intégration économique régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest : un programme d'actions,"* 68 p.

further missions were planned for West Africa over the course of 1993, to assess the problems and prospects of ECOWAS. ADB would be prepared to work with the follow-up committee of the conference to investigate the possibilities for close collaboration with other donor and research institutions in the region.

Baba Top presented a UNDP project, entitled *African Futures*,⁴⁵ that will conduct national studies of a long-term prospective nature in Africa. This project is not limited to regional integration issues, but it does seek to establish the place of regional integration projects in the future of the region. *African Futures* will be collaborating with the CINERGIE project and will seek to define the conditions under which the Pan-African Economic Community might be implemented.

Mbaye Diouf indicated that ECA has made regional integration a priority in its research and development program. He described a series of ECA activities of possible interest to researchers and indicated that ECA could provide researchers with reference documents and other forms of support.

ECA has been assisting African countries in the implementation of regional integration strategies through three types of studies:

- The preparation of treaties and protocols,
- Multisectoral projects (in support of the main regional institutions, including ECOWAS) that include a range of planning activities in areas such as industrial development, the interconnection of roads, railways, and electricity grids, environmental management, and food self-sufficiency, and
- Global plans for the transformation of economic structures (two studies on ECOWAS were performed in 1992 — one on economic structures and one on the impact of regional integration instruments).

The ECA organized the Conakry Conference on Economic Integration in Africa in 1980, and the proceedings from that event were published. It has also prepared a directory of West African IGOs and set up data banks in Addis Ababa (the Pan-African Development Information System — PADIS) and Niamey (the West African Development Information System — WADIS and the Multinational Programming and Operational Centre — MULPOC). Currently, ECA is seeking to promote research in centres of excellence, such as the African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT), sponsored by the executive secretariats of ECA, OAU, and ADB.

Jeggan Senghor, Director of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (AIEDP), explained that integration is a research priority for AIEDP. ECOWAS identified AIEDP to undertake a study on the rationalization of IGOs in West Africa, and AIEDP has assigned this task to two research teams in cooperation with the West African Economics

⁴⁵ UNDP Regional Project. RAF/91/006: *African Futures*.

Association. The study will cover: a profile of each IGO in the region, the identification of criteria for the rationalization of IGOs, the identification of measures to restructure and strengthen ECOWAS institutions, suggestions for rationalizing the interface between ECOWAS and other IGOs, an action plan, and a timetable for implementation. Senghor expressed AIEDP's willingness to mobilize its own resources, both material and human, for a major research effort on regional integration.

Amakoé Adolehoume and Béatrice Mandon, who represented the Séminaire international sur les transports en Afrique sub-saharienne (SITRASS, International Seminar on Transportation in Sub-Saharan Africa), considered it unfortunate that transportation issues were not discussed at the conference. They described the informal network of researchers associated with SITRASS and reported on studies of trucking costs and urban transport policy in Africa that had helped to cement links among researchers in the network. SITRASS is seeking to establish some commonality of research methods for work in transportation economics, and it aspires to establish a statistical database in cooperation with ECA, the World Bank, and the French Ministry of Cooperation.

Ousmane Kane described the role of the African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT) in thematic areas such as energy and food. Activities include the design and application of technology policies, the enhancement of links between research and development, and the establishment of technology information systems.

Anthony Asiwaju outlined the activities of the **National Boundaries Commission of Nigeria**, which was established in 1987 and has a research and documentation centre. The commission works on border matters of concern to Nigeria and its neighbours. It has been involved in the design of proposed agreements for governments involved in border issues and has promoted policies designed to convert border areas into privileged areas of cooperation rather than division. At a series of workshops involving Nigerian participation in Niger, Cameroon, Benin, and Equatorial Guinea, researchers discussed the impact of border problems on the population from cultural, political, economic, and historical perspectives. The next workshop will be held in Chad in 1993. Asiwaju ended by indicating his plans to establish an association for the study of border problems.

Ousmane Badiane, speaking on behalf of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), highlighted the importance of networking among research institutions at the international level. He also explained IFPRI's comparative advantage in facilitating international cooperation in research on food policy.

Mohamed El Habib Ly, Director of the Institut sénégalais de recherches agricoles (ISRA, Senegalese Institute for Agricultural Research), pointed to the importance of regional collaboration among national research institutions. He was supported by Ndiaga Mbaye, who represented the Conférence des responsables de recherche agronomique africains (CORAF, Conference of African Agricultural Research Directors). Mbaye proposed measures to facilitate

greater mobility of researchers from one country to another through appropriate legislation reinforced by a system of promotion-related incentives.

Abdoulaye Bara Diop, Director of the Institut fondamental d'Afrique noire – Cheikh Anta Diop (IFAN-CAD), reminded the conference that national research institutes also have a role to play in integration research. IFAN can participate in integration research programs, disseminate research results, and help promote similar institutions.

Madamou Diouf spoke on behalf of the Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and outlined the many research networks sponsored in Africa by that organization. He indicated the role CODESRIA could play in support of similar networking activities in the area of regional integration. CODESRIA could also help with the publication and dissemination of research results.

The above statements testify to a wide range of research activity in regional integration and to a remarkable willingness of the institutions involved to work together. Each speaker expressed the desire to participate in follow-up activities and supported the idea of a conference follow-up committee.

POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS

Plenary Session

Thursday morning's session dwelt on the political and institutional dimensions of regional integration. The chairperson, J.B. Wilmot, emphasized the importance of this session in view of the forthcoming revision of the ECOWAS Treaty. Mamadou Cissokho and Kwame Ninsin were the rapporteurs.

The first paper was presented by Daniel Bach,⁴⁶ who enquired into **the crisis of IGOs and the need to reexamine the major regional integration strategies** of the past 30 years in Africa. He considered these strategies to have proven ineffective, and he criticized the Abuja Treaty, which established the Pan-African Economic Community. The Abuja Treaty derives much of its inspiration from European experience in regional integration, but it ignores some key lessons of that experience, notably the ever-increasing openness to international markets and its expansion through a sort of "ratchet" effect. Furthermore, he suggested that the autarchic vision of the Abuja Treaty was out of step with opposite trends in Latin America and Asia, where regional trade is expanding rapidly on the basis of economic policies aimed at increased competitiveness on world markets. Because of its centralized, state-controlled approach, he described the Treaty as a "Gosplan" strategy for Africa.

Also worrisome was the fact that the Abuja treaty aimed to revitalize the integration process without regard for the social and political disintegration now threatening many African countries. In Bach's view, no policy to revitalize the integration process can succeed in the absence of conflict-settlement procedures to contain the continent's increasing instability. Discredited in their claims to have achieved national unity and leadership, weakened by the growth of the informal sector, and faced with growing ethnic and political tensions, African governments are less inclined to accept the transfer of their sovereignty to regional institutions. They are also finding it increasingly difficult to make financial contributions to major projects outside their borders.

Bach concluded with a consideration of monetary policy as a privileged instrument for reestablishing the credibility of government policy and for revitalizing regional cooperation. Reiterating an idea expressed by other conference participants, he proposed that a West African monetary union be implemented in ECOWAS by adapting and extending the franc zone and by pegging the resulting common currency to the ECU. He called on the European Community to support such a union. He considered outside support to be essential in view of the difficulties currently being encountered by the West African Clearing House.

Commentator Geert Laporte agreed that prospects for the Abuja strategy were rather dim. He considered the Abuja Treaty to be an ambitious document that aimed to copy the institutional

⁴⁶ Daniel C Bach, *"La crise des OIG ou l'impératif d'une refonte des scénarios et modèles d'intégration : le cas de l'ouest africain,"* 27 p.

apparatus of the EC despite the lack of sufficient resources for doing this on the African continent. Laporte was thus cautious in drawing lessons from Europe for African countries. However, he drew attention to certain areas of the European experience that might be of special relevance, including a step-by-step approach inspired by flexibility and pragmatism — an approach based on realistic ambitions and realistic goals in the pursuit of what is politically feasible rather than what would be desirable in an ideal world.

Mbaye Diouf of ECA felt it important to view the Abuja initiative as a long-term undertaking, while keeping in mind that the scarcity of resources for managing such a scheme will probably be attenuated over time. In his view, Africa has no choice but to be ambitious in its aspirations if it is to reconstruct its relations with the rest of the world. This objective is unattainable for countries acting in isolation. It is necessary to restructure production in an organized fashion to ensure the complementarity of national efforts to satisfy Africa's needs.

A.V. Obeng's paper,⁴⁷ which was presented by Jeggan Senghor in the author's absence, argued that the **developmental value of regional integration** should cease to be treated as a self-evident truth in all discussions of this issue. In Obeng's view, there is a need to explore more rigorously both the promise and the limitations of regional integration as a solution to Africa's ills.

Commentators S. Samen and T. Mkandawire spoke of the need to avoid a second popular trap — the treatment of integration principally as a technocratic or economic problem. They felt that integration should be defined as a political question and debated as such in universities and other fora. In particular, the legitimacy of treaties signed by authoritarian regimes should be questioned. The regimes, whether military or civilian, often pay lip service to regional integration while undermining any practical applications. Ways must be found to anchor regional integration firmly in civil society, thereby generating mass support for the process and freeing it from its elitist and undemocratic character.

Kunle Amuwo's paper asked whether regional institutions such as ECOWAS could not be used as instruments of **democracy** in the region.⁴⁸ Taking the widespread enjoyment of political and economic rights as fundamental if regional integration is to succeed, Amuwo would like to see ECOWAS harness the principles contained in the 1991 Abuja Declaration to actively support the democratization process.

Commentators were sceptical, noting that ECOWAS is itself an association of States with no direct links to the populace. There were questions about the extent of independent leadership that can be expected from ECOWAS institutions in matters of governance. Is there some type of collective dynamic or ideology that certain leaders could harness as a way of doing collectively things that might not happen on their own in all countries? Can ECOWAS itself be

⁴⁷ A.V. Obeng, "Regional and Sub-regional Cooperation in Africa: A development perspective," 28 p.

⁴⁸ Kunle Amuwo, "Can Ecowas Promote Democracy in the Sub-Region?" 22 p.

democratized, and to what extent might the region's authoritarian states try to neutralize such authentic democratic activity as might occur within their borders under the framework of ECOWAS?

A similar approach was taken by E.K. Quashigah, who would like to see regional institutions support the cause of **human rights**.⁴⁹ Quashigah suggested that human rights must be protected through political and judicial structures of a multilateral or regional nature that had substantive and independent powers in their areas of jurisdiction. He also defended the duty of such multilateral structures to intervene in national affairs in defence of human rights. Quashigah stated that the promotion of human rights could have a unifying ideological influence in ECOWAS if it became a primary area of activity for some of the new institutions being proposed in the Revised Treaty, in particular the ECOWAS Parliament and the ECOWAS Court of Justice. Quashigah hoped that the elected members of the ECOWAS Parliament might cultivate a culture of liberalism and human rights; the new ECOWAS Parliament could be used to investigate human rights abuses and prosecute such abuses in the ECOWAS Court of Law.

Commentator Akwasi Aidoo wondered about the sustainability of any new regional institutions in the absence of independent financing. In his view, priority should be given to ways of increasing collaboration among the 50 or more human rights organizations already in existence in the region. Aidoo doubted that a regional court would be effective in enforcing human rights in the absence of a strong civil society and strong judicial structures in individual countries.

Taking note of the increased reliance on regional, collective security arrangements being adopted elsewhere in the world, Benson Osadolor⁵⁰ spoke of the need for some sort of **joint regional security arrangement** in West Africa. In his view, only a regional defence framework can guarantee peace and stability, which are a precondition for development in the region. Osadolor noted the proposal of the Eminent Persons Group working on the ECOWAS Treaty Review to establish a Deputy Assistant Secretary for Political Affairs, to be assisted by a military adviser. He concluded by proposing that a Defence Council be created as the first step in the institutionalization of military cooperation in West Africa.

The two commentators took radically different positions with regard to Osadolor's suggestions. Colonel M.L. Yesufu wholeheartedly supported the author's ideas, particularly the identification of regional peace as a precondition for democratic or economic progress. He noted the European precedent and pointed out that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) preceded the EEC as a regional institution, not vice versa. Yesufu proposed the creation of a regional military group, with a commander at the rank of major general, supported by 29 officers and 40 low- or middle-grade personnel.

⁴⁹ E. K. Quashigah "Human Rights and Integration in West Africa," 25 p.

⁵⁰ Osarhieme Benson Osadolor, "Regional Security and Integration: A Study of ECOWAS Initiatives in Military Cooperation," 16 p.

O. Adewoye, on the other hand, expressed doubt as to the desirability of institutionalizing military cooperation in West Africa at this time. Many states remain inherently unstable, and most of them are under some form of autocratic regime, whether through military or one-party rule. In his view, military cooperation poses no problem among democratic states that have institutionalized control over the military (as in the case of NATO). However, the issue is a different one when dealing with states in which the military still play a dominant political role and where military cooperation might be used to reinforce existing autocratic regimes.

The need for caution when calling for the creation of new regional institutions was frequently expressed during this plenary session and the one on day 3. There was concern about the viability of such institutions over the long term. It may be preferable to concentrate efforts on the rationalization and strengthening of existing institutions. An issue often alluded to was how best to sequence the process of institutional development. The consensus seemed to favour priority for the reinforcement of democracy at the national level and the establishment of independently financed and democratic political structures at the regional level, before it is feasible to create sustainable regional institutions.

Panel 4: Regional Institutions

Panel 4, on regional institutions, was chaired by Anthony Asiwaju: Daniel Bach and Ebrima Sall were the rapporteurs.

The first two papers, by Ntumba Luabu Lumu⁵¹ and Adam Malam-Kandine,⁵² looked at the **institutional and decision-making structures** of regional integration in Africa, compared with the approach used in the European Community. Lumu reviewed the structures and mechanisms of ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Preferential Trade Area (PTA); whereas, Malam-Kandine focused on ECOWAS and the CEAO. However, these two independent papers arrived at much the same conclusions.

The authors argued that the regional institutions reviewed are incapable of satisfying the regional aspirations assigned to them because of the primacy that is accorded the national sovereignty of their individual members in their decision-making structures. Indicative of this "interstate" or "intergovernmental" approach are: the preeminence of the Council of Heads of States in decision-making, the principle of national representation through the Council of Ministers and intergovernmental technical commissions, rule by consensus, the relative weakness of the secretariats, and the limited jurisdiction of the regional tribunals. This contrasts with the European approach in which institutions were designed from the start to serve a community of interests. Elements of this contrasting approach include: the use of a voting mechanism in the European Council as opposed to rule by consensus, the role allocated to the European Commission as a body intended to serve the community as a whole, the independence of the European parliament from national governments, and the relatively important and independent role accorded to the European Court of Justice.

Commentators Demba Sy, Mamadou Cissokho, and Luc Marius Ibriga all agreed with the authors on the importance of legal and institutional factors in explaining the failures of regional integration in Africa. They noted the purely administrative character of the secretariats and the weak financial situation of regional institutions. They observed that there was an attempt to reinforce the concept of supranationalism in the current review of the ECOWAS Treaty, but they felt that this did not constitute a fundamental rethinking of the "intergovernmental" approach. In any case, there has been some resistance to the adoption of the new package because some states perceive a threat to their sovereignty.

⁵¹ Ntumba Luabu Lumu, *"Ressemblances et dissemblances institutionnelles entre la CEDEAO et les groupements économiques régionaux postérieurs (CEEAC, ZEP),"* 27 p.

⁵² Adam Malam-Kandine, *"La faiblesse des structures institutionnelles comme frein au processus d'intégration régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest,"* 15 p.

Omoniyi Adewoye⁵³ presented a paper establishing a theoretical, philosophical, and historical framework to analyze the link between **constitutionalism** and regional integration. Constitutionalism involves a set of principles that regiment the behaviour of the state: the notion of limits to the power of government, the protection of human rights, the independence of the judiciary, democratic and universal suffrage, and the rule of law. The author's basic argument was that constitutionalism in Europe fostered the idea of a state with limited powers; therefore, the ground was prepared for the concession of certain state powers to supranational institutions. He observed that these conditions do not exist in Africa and that they must be nurtured. Like Quashigah and Kunle, Adewoye advocated reform from the top down by the creation of a regional judiciary capable of enforcing respect for human rights and of limiting abuses of power.

Commentators Babacar Kanté and Kwame Ninsin reminded the audience that democratic constitutions guaranteeing civil rights and the rule of law already exist everywhere in the region. The problem resides in the application of these principles. A parallel exists with ECOWAS resolutions, which are pronounced but not implemented. What the region needs is not new constitutional and legal instruments, but ways of ensuring that existing instruments are properly applied when the political will to do so is patently missing. The authors decried the lack of a constitutionalist political culture in the practice of African government.

The commentators also advocated the harmonization of the multiple legal and political cultures that have resulted from the region's different colonial, religious, and ethnic traditions. The lack of legislative harmonization in the areas of trade, business, and employment is an obvious obstacle to economic integration.

The last speaker, Geert Laporte,⁵⁴ applauded the recent renewal of interest in regional integration, but he was unsure if the time was ripe to bridge the longstanding gap between words and effective implementation. A key factor will be the commitment of key African leaders to the process. Beyond that, the indispensable **institutional machinery** required for effective regional cooperation must be built at three different levels: the level of regional institutions (which has received the most attention so far), the national level, and the interface between national organizations and regional ones. Noting that the effectiveness of any regional initiative depends on how it is accepted and implemented at the national level, Laporte suggested that the major requirement at this time was the creation of an institutional base for regional integration at the national level. He proposed that donors may have a role to play in supporting this process. Laporte seized the opportunity to describe the research program of the European Centre for Development Policy Management.

The desirability of learning from the European experience was emphasized. One question was whether Nigeria might play the pivotal role in West Africa that Germany had played in Europe. Caution was expressed about shallow attempts to mimic the European experience.

⁵³ Omoniyi Adewoye, "On Constitutionalism and Economic Integration," 23 p.

⁵⁴ Geert Laporte, "Institutional Requirements for Effective Regional Cooperation in Africa," 13 p.

Panel 5: Social Movements

Panel 5 was chaired by Abdoulaye Bara Diop: Kwame Ninsin and Amady Aly Dieng were the rapporteurs.

The first paper, by Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo,⁵⁵ addressed the disconnection between **national political movements and ECOWAS**. The author noted the nationalist tendencies of most social and political movements and the political isolation of ECOWAS from popular movements. To avoid being challenged, ECOWAS itself must be made more democratic at all levels and become the focus of regionalist sentiment that is capable of countering more nationalist forms of social identification.

Sabo Bako's paper⁵⁶ addressed the **place of migrant labour** in West Africa. Bako noted how the migrant population, which numbers in the millions in the region, is being bypassed by recent democratization processes because migrant labourers have limited rights in their host countries. He called for an elaboration of the ECOWAS protocol on the free movement of persons to include a bill of democratic freedoms and human rights for migrants, which would be enshrined in the constitutions of member countries and protected by the courts.

The last paper to be presented in Panel 5 was Pat Williams' treatment of **women's involvement in the informal trade sector** and the implications of this involvement for economic integration in West Africa.⁵⁷ Women have been hit particularly hard by the economic crisis of the 1980s and have tended to seek refuge in the informal sector. They have displayed a remarkable degree of inventiveness and creativity in their market strategies both within and between countries. Unfortunately, their efforts have gone unrecognized by those responsible for the promotion of economic integration in the region.

Despite the unregulated nature of the informal sector, women still face substantial obstacles in the pursuit of their activities (official and unofficial taxes, bribes, and unnecessary harassment from government officials). Williams called on governments in the region to recognize and encourage the activities of women traders in the informal sector. Beyond this, efforts should be made to revitalize the formal sector and to create conditions more favourable to the participation of women in the integration process.

In her commentary, Veronica Mullei suggested the need for a better understanding of the low participation rate of women in formal trade. Mullei felt that researchers could usefully study examples of success, such as those cited in the presentation, to draw lessons for others.

⁵⁵ Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo, "The Rise of Social and Political Movements: A Challenge for Regional Integration or a Factor Towards Real Co-operation within ECOWAS?," 27 p.

⁵⁶ Sabo Bako, "Migrant Labour, Integration and the Democratisation Process in West Africa," 12 p.

⁵⁷ Pat Williams, "Women and Economic Integration in the West African Sub-Region," 17 p.

Panel 6: The Democratic Process and Regional Security

Panel 6 was chaired by Professor Francis Wodie. Amuwo Kunle and Bernard Founou-Tchuigoua were the rapporteurs. Four papers were presented.

The first paper, by Boafo-Arthur Kwame,⁵⁸ explored the link between **democratic governance at the national level** and the possibilities for regional integration. In Kwame's view, the lack of political stability in the region has been the most serious constraint to the implementation of regional integration under ECOWAS. He attributed much of this political instability to the lack of democracy in the region. The modes of governance prevailing in the region are dissimilar across countries at any point in time and vary over time as countries shift from one type of regime to another. The highly personalized nature of many regimes adds an additional dimension of variability. The resulting political instability has hampered the ratification of regional protocols, led to discontinuities in the implementation of national and regional policies, and led to border closings, expulsions, and hostilities that have had obvious consequences for regional integration.

In Kwame's view, greater political legitimacy and reduced civil strife, which accompany democratic forms of governance, would lead to increased stability and have favourable repercussions for regional integration. Benefits would include more continuity in the application of regional integration measures, increased interest on the part of investors, and less preoccupation by governments with matters of internal security. Greater accountability of governments and concern for matters other than internal security should lead to an increased "political will" for regional integration, and decisions taken at the regional level would themselves acquire more legitimacy. Finally, one would expect collaboration between states to be much easier when governments and the general public share common political and economic values across the region. Although democratic governance would certainly not eliminate all social and political tensions in the region, it would promote a sociopolitical climate capable of sustaining the process of regional integration in a way that has not been possible up to now.

Commentator Mike Oquaye pointed out the important role played in the creation of the EC by a common democratic culture. As long as this phenomenon is absent in West Africa, integration is likely, in his view, to remain more a dream than a reality. He identified the following conditions for the establishment of a democratic order in West Africa: constitutionalism (as a check against government excesses), the separation of powers, the rule of law, and the protection of fundamental human rights.

Peter Karibe Mendy's paper on the experience of Guinea Bissau⁵⁹ dealt with integration issues at both the national and the regional levels and considered some of the obstacles inherited from the colonial era. The author's principal aim was to explain the failed attempt at integration between Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde, which he attributed to the social and cultural divide

⁵⁸ Boafo-Arthur Kwame, "Democracy and the Prospects for Integration in West Africa," 14 p.

⁵⁹ Peter Karibe Mendy, "Colonial Heritage and the Challenge of Integration: the Experience of Guinea-Bissau," 21 p.

between the two peoples that resulted from their distinct colonial histories. Despite centuries-old links between the two countries, the Portuguese policy of assimilation in Cape Verde and the use of Cape Verdians as civil servants in Guinea Bissau during the colonial era, alienated the two peoples to such an extent that subsequent efforts at integration were doomed to failure.

Commentator Ebrima Sall drew a parallel between the case described by Mendy and the case of Gambia and Senegal. The fear of domination by one country over the other (domination by Cape Verde over Guinea Bissau in the former case, and Senegal over Gambia and in the latter) has been an impediment to integration in each case. Another commonality of the two cases is the lack of a popular constituency in favour of regional integration. Only certain Senegalese importers seem to have been interested in the Senegambia initiative — as a way of reducing illegal imports channelled through Gambia. Other groups saw it the other way, as a positive threat to the livelihood that they derived from the same sort of cross-border trade.

Nduba Echezona presented a paper⁶⁰ on the impact of the emerging "new world order" on regional integration in West Africa. The author argued that this new world order had initiated a "global hurricane" of political and economic change. Because such change is unipolar and spearheaded by the United States, it reflects the values of the advanced, industrial-capitalist world and will reinforce the "villagization" of the global political economy. The emerging global village is characterized by a plural, democratic order, the defence of human rights, and growing interdependence among nations. In the Echezona's view, this spread of democratic values and economic interdependence could stimulate regional integration in ECOWAS.

This thesis was the object of several comments. Ebrima Sall considered that the paper had glossed over the unfavourable aspects of the international economic system. Frank Ofei agreed that the new world order is helping to reinforce the emergence of political pluralism and human rights in Africa, but George Larbi reminded participants of the fragility of democratic institutions in West Africa. He was of the view that the new world order will have little impact on regional integration in West Africa in the absence of consensus on democracy and the rule of law.

Shuaibu Danfulani then presented a paper⁶¹ that argued in favour of **collective regional security** as a precondition for peace, democracy, stability, and development. He proposed the establishment of a West African Regional Security Framework operating through diplomatic, political, economic, and ultimately military means. He emphasized the importance of "confidence-building" between countries over the long term and considered a wide range of measures intended to satisfy that objective. These measures could include diplomatic and military measures (such as the constitution of an expert group on conflict-prevention or the organization of joint military manoeuvres) combined with strictly civilian matters (such as intercultural exchanges and the creation of professional associations or political groups on a regional basis).

⁶⁰ Nduba Echezona, "ECOWAS, Regional Integration and the New World Order," 25 p.

⁶¹ Shuaibu Ahmed Danfulani, "West African Regional Security Framework: a Diplomatic Instrument of Peace, Stability, Democracy and Development," 25 p.

CONCLUSIONS

Forum on the Promotion of Research

The first session of the closing plenary focused on issues related to the promotion of research and follow-up activities to the conference. It was chaired by the Honourable Flora MacDonald, Chairperson of IDRC's Board of Governors. Hervé Kaboré was rapporteur. Réal Lavergne provided a synthesis of ideas emanating from Wednesday afternoon's forum on the funding and institutionalization of research.

The most immediate follow-up activity of the conference will be to publish a synthesis of the proceedings. This will be followed by the publication of a volume that will consist of the best papers presented at the conference and a small number of invited papers. This book will be intended as a reference document for researchers and decision-makers. Tentatively titled, *Integration and Regional Cooperation in West Africa: A Multidimensional Approach*, the volume will be divided into three main parts:

- Experience, Visions, and Prospects,
- Economic Integration, and
- Social, Political, and Institutional Aspects.

Reflections on different ways to reinforce regional integration research in West Africa yielded the following suggestions:

- The establishment of research centres in universities or other institutions to act as support bases for researchers working on regional integration in different countries,
- The creation of research networks to improve the coordination of individual and institutional research activities and encourage collaboration,
- The creation of databases of researchers, research activities, and institutions working on regional integration,
- The development of documentation centres in individual countries, and
- The creation of a multidisciplinary association of researchers working on regional integration issues.

Forum on Key Lessons from the Conference

The second of Friday morning's sessions was devoted to a synthesis of conference proceedings by Thandika Mkandawire, Elwyn Chaparro, Jeggan Senghor, Jean Coussy, Omoniyi Adewoye, Jean-Claude Mailhot, and Boubacar Barry. It was chaired by Marie-Angélique Savané. The rapporteurs were E.K. Quashigah and Momar-Coumba Diop.

Thandika Mkandawire, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, suggested that regional integration could only succeed if it was solidly rooted in national politics. It is essential that the costs and benefits of integration be properly understood, not just in global terms for the community as a whole, but also from the perspective of each member country. Differences in attitudes, approaches, and expectations between Anglophone and Francophone countries also need to be discussed more openly.

Divergent interests also exist within individual countries. In the 1960s and 1970s, it was difficult to identify interest groups with regional concerns: there were no indigenous capitalists to speak of and business was geared to local markets. Has that situation evolved? Where are the interest groups most interested in regional markets?

It would be illuminating to revisit certain problems of national concern from the point of view of regional integration. Ethnic conflict is a case in point. Although a problem at the national level, ethnic identity could be a much more positive factor at the regional level because ethnic groups straddle national borders in the region. Regional integration might, in turn, be a way of defusing ethnic tensions by expanding the political arena and thus reducing the importance of national rivalries.

Mkandawire then broached the international environment, whose recent evolution raises questions about the future of regional integration in Africa. In the 1960s, it was assumed the major powers wanted to continue to divide and rule Africa. Is this still true? What are the implications? What are the long-term repercussions of the economic and debt crises in African countries. Given the increased export-orientation imposed on countries as a result of structural adjustment, what are the consequences of this for existing models of regional integration? How can the two phenomena be reconciled?

Jean-Claude Mailhot extracted the following main points from the conference:

- The absence of conflict between greater openness of national economies to world markets and growth in regional trade,
- The necessity of sound macroeconomic and sectoral policy frameworks as a stimulus to regional trade (regional integration cannot be a substitute for structural adjustment),
- The possible advantages of establishing a single-currency zone for the region as a whole,

- The nonconvergence of government and private-sector interests in matters of regional integration and, therefore, the need to pursue democratization (both national and regional) as a precondition for advancement,
- The weakness of national institutions, as an impediment to the design and implementation of regional cooperation agreements, and
- The importance of regional security matters.

Mailhot also identified some remaining questions regarding strategies for regional integration:

- Should efforts be focused on existing IGOs or on key groups of countries?
- What can be done to boost the political will of states to foster regional integration?
- What national institutions should be promoted to support the regional integration process?
- Which integration strategy should be selected — the protectionist and voluntarist approach of the ECA, an outward-looking approach, a "variable geometry" approach, or a sectoral and partial approach?
- What are the key objectives of economic integration — economic efficiency, economic diversification, or the autarchy of production systems?

Omoniyi Adewoye reiterated the importance of national institutions in the integration process to ensure effective implementation of resolutions taken by the Heads of States. Corollaries of this observation are the need for popular participation in the process, and democratization in general, because integration is difficult to achieve under authoritarian regimes. Adewoye identified three priority areas for increased regional cooperation: education, information, and security. In his view, the most definitive conclusion to be drawn from the conference was the usefulness of approaching regional integration from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Jeggan Senghor felt that the conference proceedings had been interesting and relevant. It brought together researchers and decision-makers and provided evidence that integration was indeed a priority for the region. Senghor drew attention to a wide range of institutional issues that must be addressed to ensure regional integration in the region. These include: the limited management capabilities and financial problems of the IGOs, the issue of supranationality and how to manage it, the proliferation of IGOs and the need for their rationalization, and the need to establish appropriate institutional mechanisms at the national level.

He identified certain issues that required further work: the link between SAPs and regional integration, the relationship between the problems of national integration and regional integration, the limited capacity of the post-colonial state to participate effectively in regional integration, and the potential of using monetary integration in WAMU as a launching pad for the creation of a broader economic community in West Africa.

Elkyn Chaparro praised the conference for having brought together researchers and experts working in an applied capacity. He praised the intellectual honesty of the discussions and the focus of the debate on the "real" issues. He felt the conference "demystified" regional integration.

In his view, the debate on regional integration should be part of a broader reflection on Africa's future that should be inspired by a new vision that is less reliant on the roles of the State or foreign aid. The promotion of "futures" studies seemed to him to be indispensable, and he returned to an idea expressed in the first plenary session of the conference regarding the need to promote strategic thinking on Africa, by Africans themselves.

On regional integration specifically, he suggested building on those things that are working (such as WAMU) and identifying the major cultural assets of Africa on which it is possible to build. He felt it was essential to recognize the existence of losers and winners from regional integration because regional integration presumes an increase in competition. However Chaparro drew attention to the existence of "false losers" — the "rentiers" who profit from protected markets and tend to resist regional integration from fear of losing these privileges.

Chaparro suggested that the World Bank should reflect on the best ways of supporting regional integration in Africa. He also proposed support for institutions such as AIEDP, CODESRIA, and ECOWAS to develop their research capacity.

For Jean Coussy, the value of the conference lay in the fact that its proceedings had not been reduced to a purely economic debate. Coussy reminded the audience that African integration has many dimensions: history, politics, economics, culture, and security.

Coussy noted that many of the speakers had been somewhat "utopian" in their enthusiasm for integration. Integration emerged in the debate as the negation of today's Africa, which finds itself divided and threatened by further disintegration. The resulting strategic vision for Africa is quite distinct from that currently evident in other parts of the developing world. The recent trend elsewhere, especially in Southeast Asia, is to face world markets directly — without passing through an initial phase of regional integration behind protectionist barriers. Some parts of Latin America (Mexico and Chile) now evince a desire to integrate with North America, rather than limit themselves to South America as the structuralist school had proposed in the 1960s. These observations do not rule out the freedom of Africans to choose their own development strategy, but they do suggest the need to reflect on the specificity of the strategy being proposed and the difficulties of achieving it.

The utopian vision that emerged from the conference reflects an intellectual trend that began 4 or 5 years ago. It seems that every institution, every donor, every region of Africa, and even every individual uses the term integration differently and proposes different strategies to achieve it. Some believe that integration projects must be focused around a single-currency zone; others believe that the franc zone should be reassessed. Some projects advocate regional protectionism; others are based on trade liberalization. Some suggest that spontaneous integration

through parallel trade and inter-African migration should be encouraged; others consider parallel trade as a possible cause of disintegration. Coussy identified the need to compare these multifarious projects to distinguish those differences that are fundamental from those that can be reconciled. It would be useful to clarify the noncontradictory nature of many of these initiatives, which are often presented as though they constituted a unique solution to Africa's problems.

Coussy suggested that the term "regional cooperation" better connotes two important points crucial to the success of any particular proposal. The first point is the need to avoid conflicts of interest: the projects that will work are those that involve positive-sum gains, or compensation schemes of some sort when all else fails. The second point is that countries can cooperate on many fronts and with many partners at one time. For example, African countries continent-wide could collaborate by adopting similar positions on debt and structural adjustment; neighbouring countries could cooperate on sectoral matters or migration issues; groups of countries with similar historical traditions might attempt to harmonize their legal systems, as the Francophone countries are now trying to do. Coussy cited the European Community as the perfect example of the way in which diverse strategies can be applied at the same time with different partners (including partners outside the community).

Boubacar Barry, Scientific Coordinator for the Conference, pointed to the role of regional institutions, governments, pressure groups, and international donors in advancing the cause of regional integration. He appealed to the ECA and the donor community to seek out common ground to move regional integration forward in Africa. He then stressed the need for more thorough work on regional integration that would go beyond the current surveys of the issues and more vigorously seek out solutions to the problems that are encountered.

Closing Session

The closing speech was given by G.R. Bourrier. After thanking the researchers and institutions who had participated in the conference, Bourrier congratulated the Scientific Coordinator, the Senior Program Office in charge for IDRC, and other professionals in IDRC for their roles in successfully organizing the conference. He voiced his heartfelt appreciation to the representatives of various institutions who worked on the Scientific Committee for their diligence during several months of preparatory work, and he concluded by thanking all the IDRC staff for the considerable time and energy they had invested in making the conference a success.

ACRONYMS

AAWORD	Association of African Women for Research on Development
AAF-SAP	African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes
ACDI	Agence canadienne de développement international
ACMS	African Centre for Monetary Studies
ADB	African Development Bank
AIEDP	African Institute for Economic Development and Planning
ARAC	African Regional Aquaculture Centre
ARCT	African Regional Centre for Technology
ARCIS	Africa Regional Centre for Information Science
BCAS	Bank of Central African States
BCEAO	Central Bank of West African States
CACEU	Central African Customs and Economic Union
CCE	Commission of European Communities
CEAO	West African Economic Community
CEBV	Economic Community for Meat and Livestock
CEDEAO	Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
CFA	African Financial Community
CFAF	African Financial Community Franc
CGEM	Computerized General-Equilibrium Model
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CINERGIE	Regional Integration Promotion Unit for West and Central Africa
CIRES	Centre ivoirien de recherches économiques et sociales
CNRS	Centre national de la recherche scientifique
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa
CORAF	Conference of African Agricultural Research Directors
CRAT	Centre régional africain de technologie
CRDI	Centre de recherches pour le développement international
CRES	Regional Centre for Solar Energy
EBAD	École de Bibliothécaires, Archivistes et Documentalistes
EC	European Community
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECU	European Currency Unit
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEC	European Economic Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FOVAD	Federation of African Private Voluntary Organizations
GCA	Global Coalition for Africa
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFAN-CAD	Basic Institute of Black Africa - Cheikh Anta Diop

IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Policy
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISRA	Senegalese Institute for Agricultural Research
MULPOC	Multinational Programming and Operational Centre
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NISER	Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMVS	Senegal River Development Organization
PADIS	Pan-African Development Information System
PTA	Preferential Trade Area
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SITRASS	Séminaire international sur les transports en Afrique sub-Saharienne
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United Nations Agency for International Development
WADB	West African Development Bank
WADIS	West African Development Information System
WAEA	West African Economics Association
WAMU	West African Monetary Union
WARDA	West African Rice Development Association

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⁶² Included here are Abass Bundu, A.V. Obeng, and Ademola Salau who were not able to participate in person but whose papers were read by a second party.

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